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ISSUE 120

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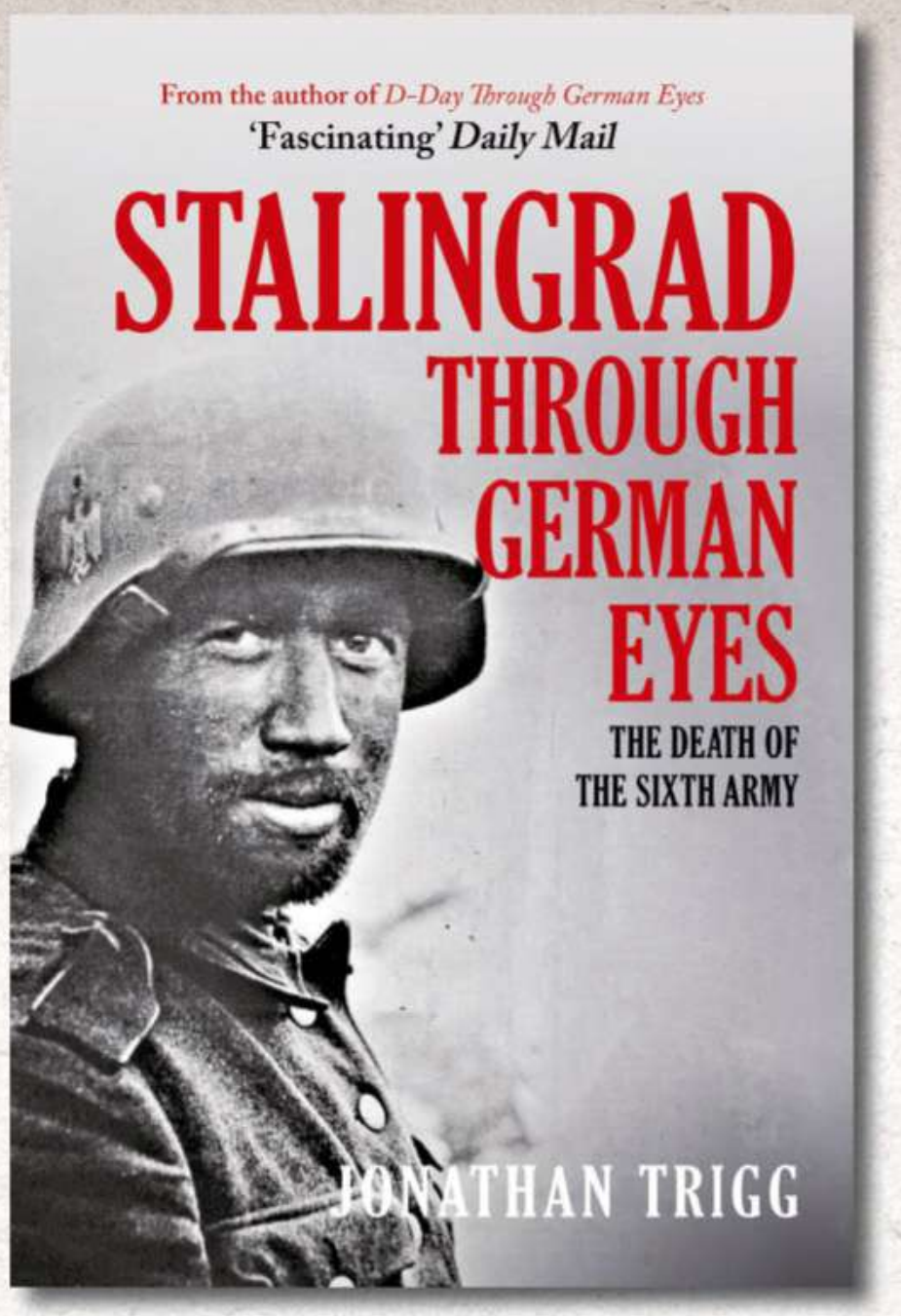
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STALINGRAD THROUGH GERMAN EYES
THE DEATH OF THE SIXTH ARMY
JONATHAN TRIGG

THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD THROUGH GERMAN EYES: THE DEATH OF THE SIXTH ARMY

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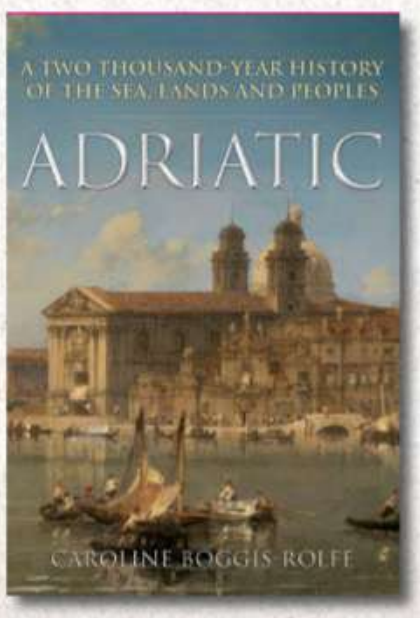

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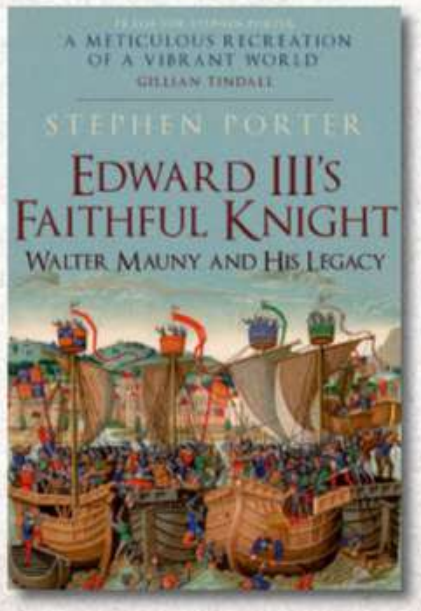
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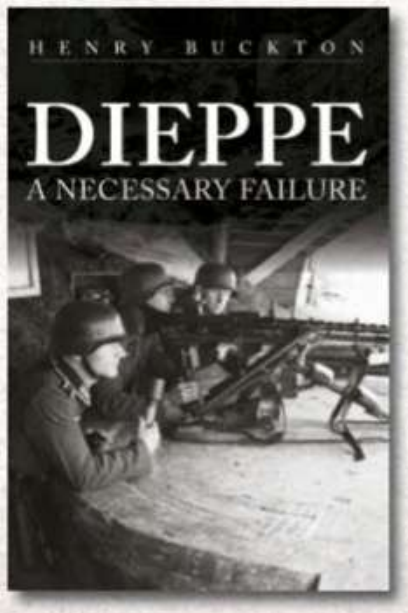

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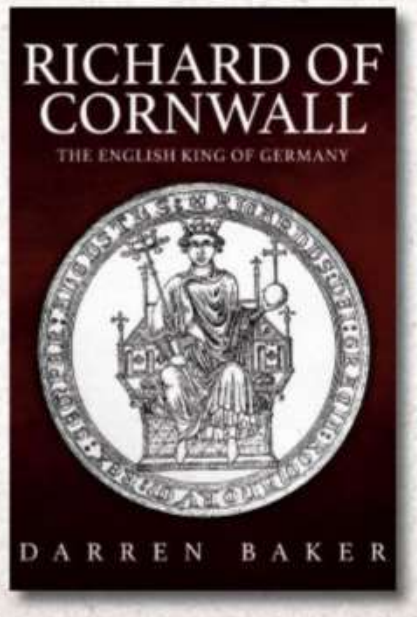

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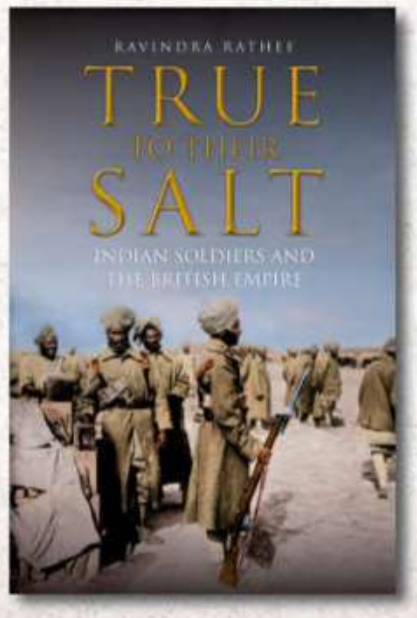

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Mary I is welcomed to London to be crowned queen, accompanied by her sister, Princess Elizabeth, in 1553

Welcome

The temptation to psychoanalyse figures from the past is strong and is probably best avoided. When considering the upbringing of Mary and Elizabeth Tudor, this temptation is particularly compelling. The daughters of Henry VIII were flung from pillar to post during their childhoods. Honoured and beloved princesses, then rejected by a fickle father, finally brought back into the fold, only to be further torn apart by religious divisions. We've considered the reign of Mary I in this magazine before, but this time we wanted to look at it from the perspective of her half-sister. How did the experience of the princesses affect the queens they would become? What did Elizabeth I learn about holding the English throne from the first woman to sit on it?

I'm delighted that we have historian Tracy Borman as our guide to answer these questions and more in this issue's cover feature. We also have fantastic insight from Iain MacGregor on the importance of the Battle of Stalingrad 80 years ago and from Christian Raffensperger on the lost medieval power of Kyivan Rus. Plus, Hareth Al Bustani breaks down the legendary tale of the 47 Rōnin and we learn all about human sacrifice. We've even got a story about the conman who tried to sell the Eiffel Tower for scrap… twice! Some great stories to dive into. I hope you enjoy them and everything else this issue.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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Cover images
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Photography and illustration
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Printed by Wyndeham Peterborough, Storey's Bar Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5YS

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU www.marketforce.co.uk Tel: 0203 787 9060

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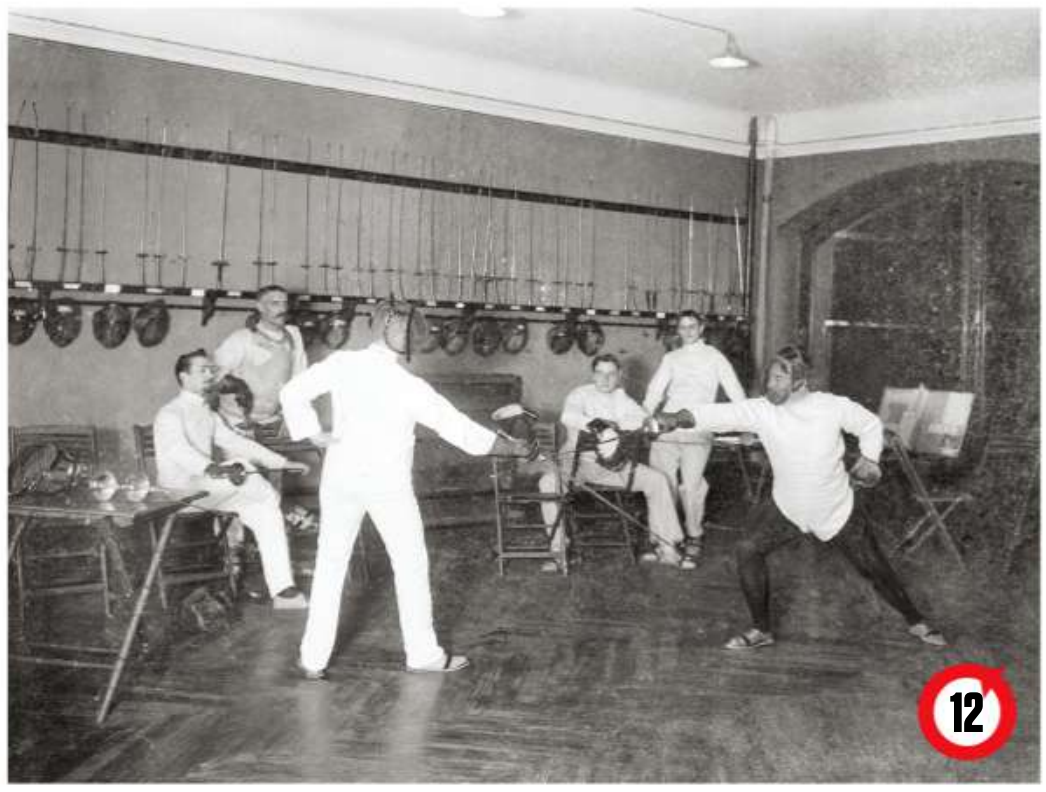

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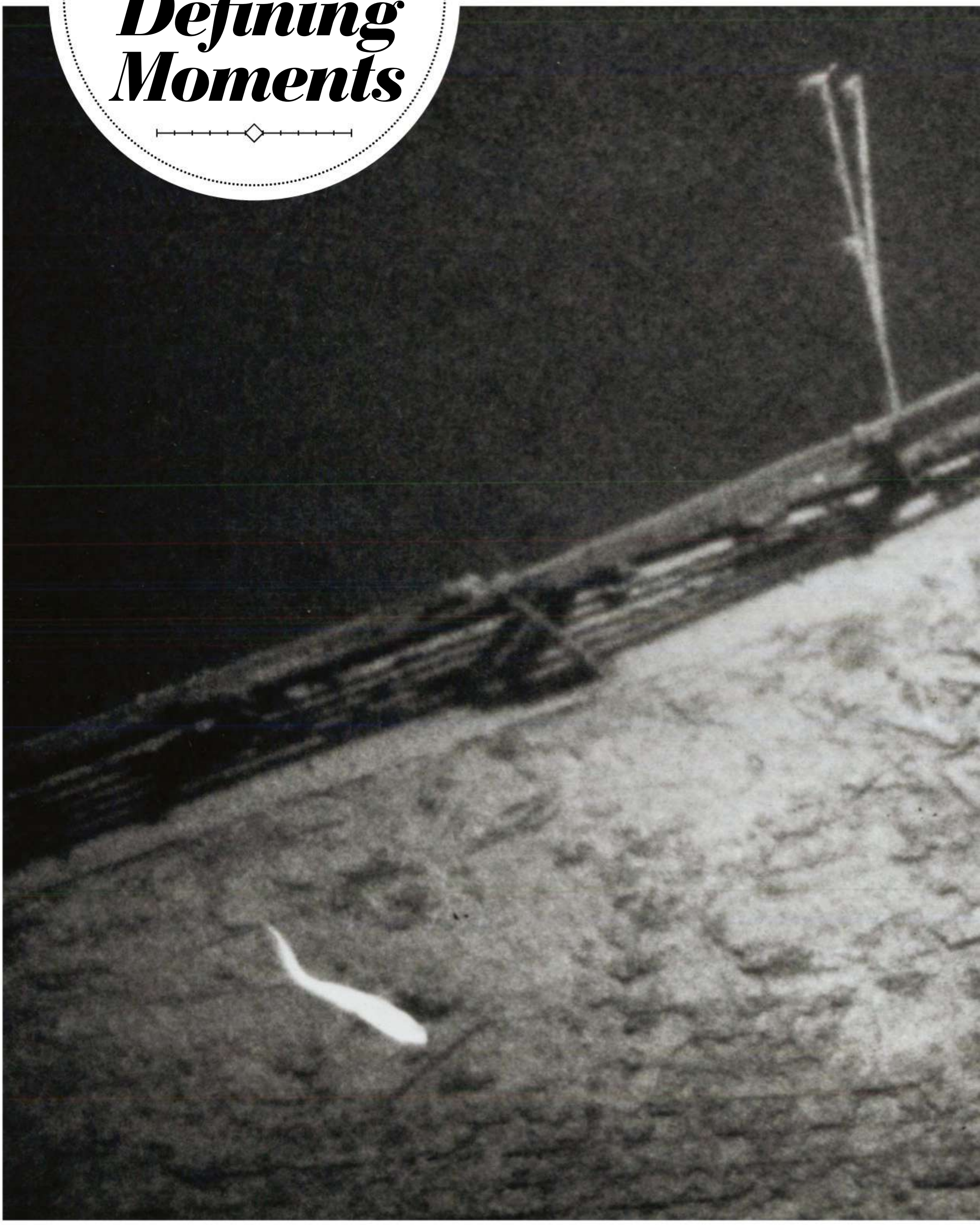
Mary vs Elizabeth

How the battle between the queens reshaped the English monarchy

Defining Moments



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1 September 1985

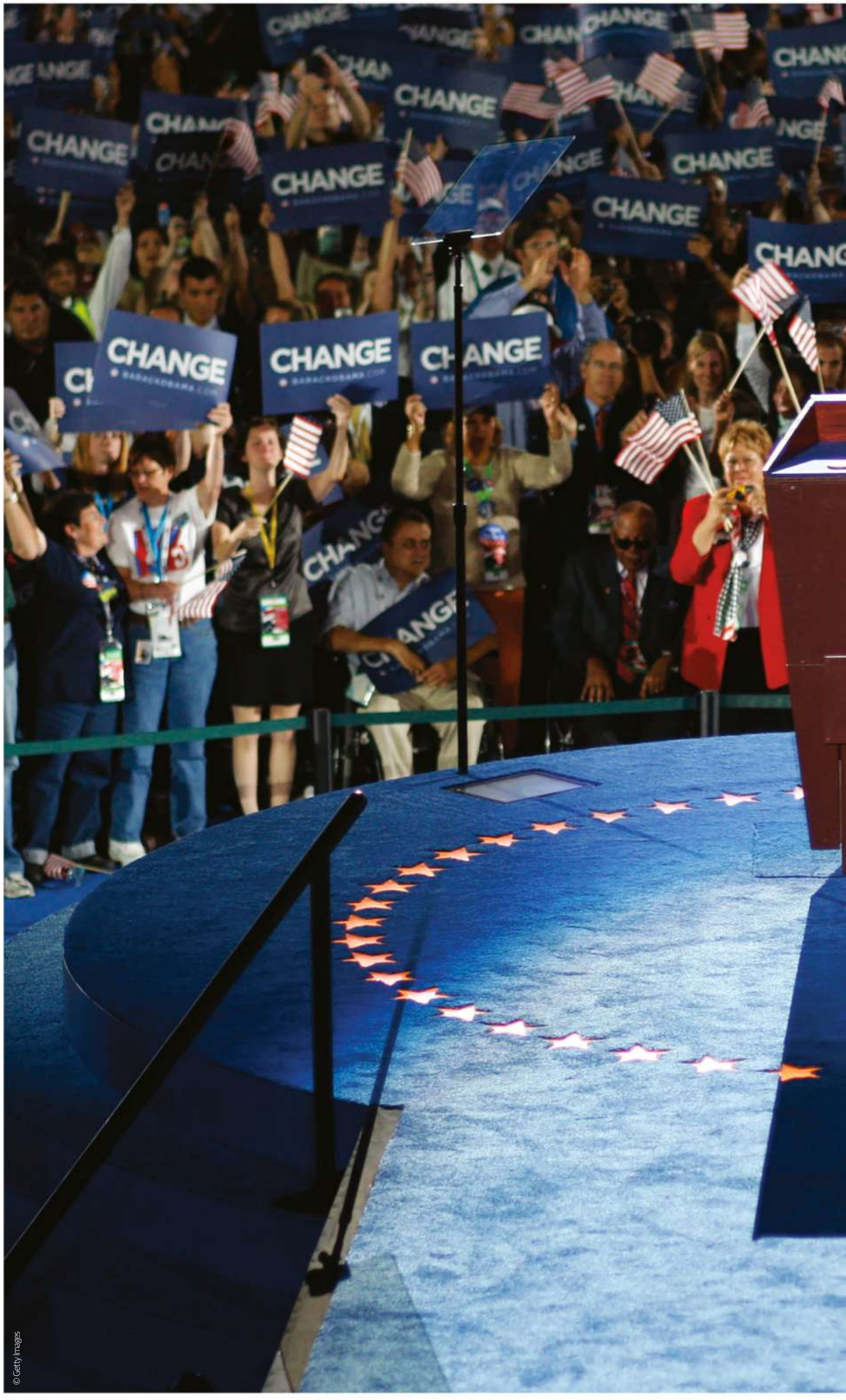
TITANIC WRECK FOUND

The Titanic sank on its maiden voyage from Southampton to New York in April 1912. It took 73 years for the wreck to finally be found, after several expeditions, on the floor of the North Atlantic ocean. This is one of the first photos of the remains of the Titanic, which has now been thoroughly explored numerous times since its discovery.

28 August 2008

OBAMA NOMINATED AS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

After running for the Democratic presidential nomination against Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama was officially declared the presidential candidate in Denver, Colorado, at the Democratic National Convention. He was the first African-American to be elected by a major party as a candidate for the US presidency. He went on to become the first African-American President of the United States.



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DISCOVER THE INDIVIDUALS AND EVENTS THAT SHAPED AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

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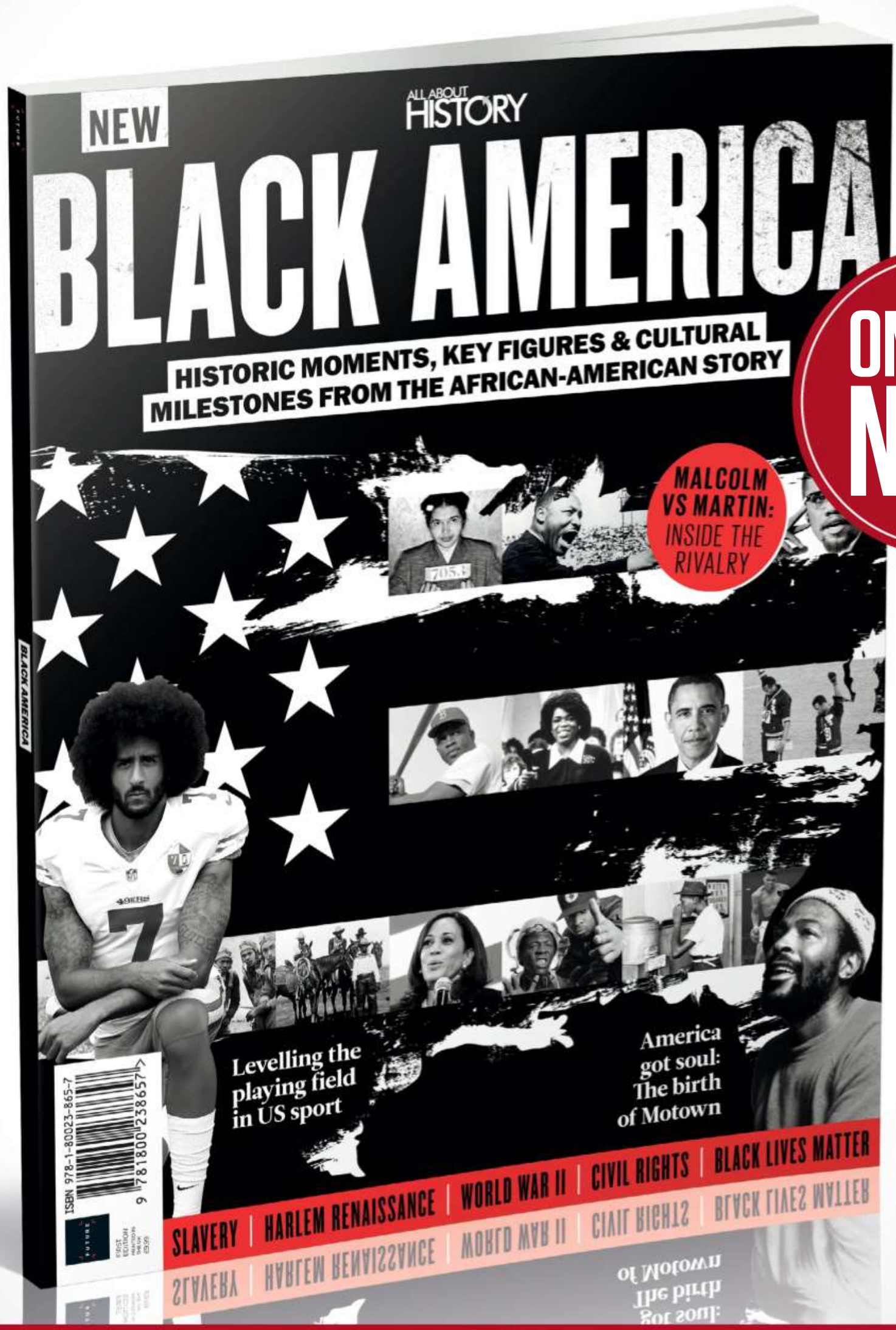
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ALL ABOUT SWORDS

Cutting-edge history of the evolution of the blade and some of its most celebrated practitioners

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EVOLUTION OF THE LONGSWORD

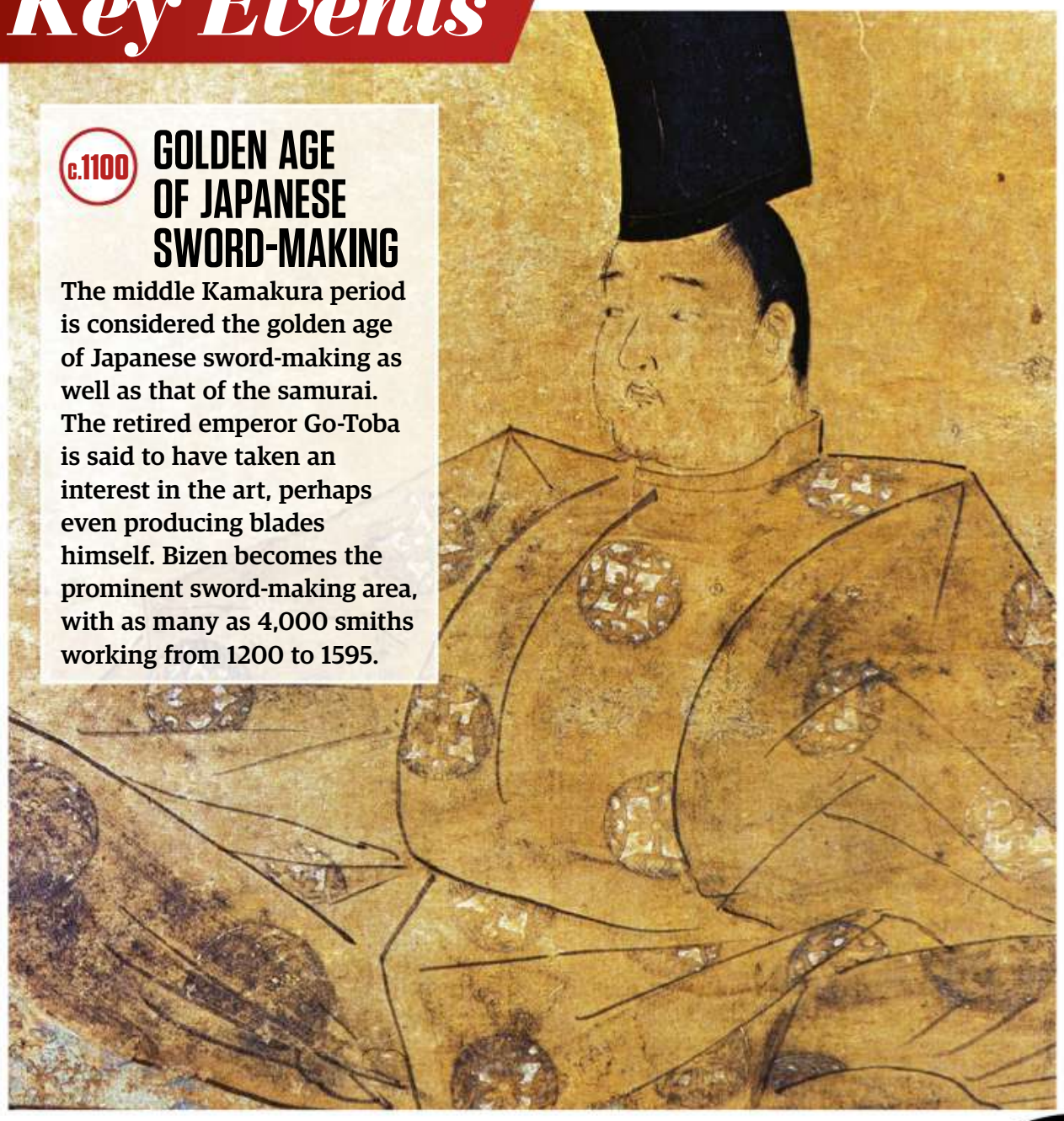
Written by Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth

Main image source: © Alamy

Key Events

c.1100 GOLDEN AGE OF JAPANESE SWORD-MAKING

The middle Kamakura period is considered the golden age of Japanese sword-making as well as that of the samurai. The retired emperor Go-Toba is said to have taken an interest in the art, perhaps even producing blades himself. Bizen becomes the prominent sword-making area, with as many as 4,000 smiths working from 1200 to 1595.



The US Navy retained the cutlass as an official weapon until 1949

c.1600 PIRATE CUTLASS

Able to cut through heavy ropes, the cutlass becomes popular among sailors. Contrary to its image it's not used exclusively by pirates, but due to its historical use by famous pirates such as Captain Kidd and William Fly, the weapon becomes associated with them.

THE FIRST SWORDS 3300 BCE

Discovered in Arslantepe, Turkey, these weapons are unique compared to other blades of the time. The hilt and blade have been cast as a single piece and there's a narrow bevel to the edges, traits that would not be typical for another 500 years.

ORIGINS OF THE KATANA 700 BCE

Swords considered to be the precursor to the Japanese katana begin to appear. The sword remains the favoured weapon until the beginning of the Meiji period.

VIKING SWORDS 700 – 1000

Viking swords show a development in craftsmanship with greater attention given to the decoration of the handle, often encrusted with precious jewels and adorned with lavish detail.

KHOPESH 3000 – 1300 BCE

One of the most important early swords, this ancient Egyptian weapon was cast from bronze in a sickle shape and was particularly popular during the era of the New Kingdom.

GLADIUS 200 – 101 BCE

The Roman sword, known as the gladius, becomes the standard weapon of the Roman army. The weapon is introduced due to Rome having encountered Hannibal's army in Spain.

ULFBERHT SWORDS c.800

These particularly strong German swords are so popular that a ban has to be placed on exporting them to limit access for Viking raiders. Ulfberht may have been a master-maker, but as some were produced into the 11th century the name may have become used by a workshop.

1500 RAPIER

During the 16th and 17th centuries the rapier becomes the civilians' sidearm of choice. The rapier is known for its intricate hand guard (some have 'cups' that cover the hand) and for its double-edged blade. It is a popular duelling weapon.

c.1700 SMALLSWORD

At the start of the 18th century the lighter smallsword begins to supersede the rapier as the civilians' weapon of choice. These are often elegantly decorated and beautiful to behold. The smallsword fades away at the end of the century as pistols became more popular.

It's claimed that Defferre sought to injure Ribière so that it would 'spoil his wedding night', which was the next day

1967 THE LAST DUEL

The last official duel in the history of France takes place. Politicians René Ribière and Gaston Defferre engage in four minutes of sword fighting after the former told the latter to "shut up, you idiot" in France's National Assembly. Ribière loses after being injured.

GERMAN SCHOOL OF FENCING C.1300

Famous sword master Johannes Liechtenauer, about whom little is known, preserves his teaching in the form of mnemonic poems and becomes extremely influential in the German School of Fencing.

FOIL FENCING C.1600

The introduction of the small sword proves to be a dangerous one for fencing. The foil, a flexible weapon ideal for practising, becomes more widely used.

MODERN MENSUR C.1900

German academic fencing, or 'mensur', flourishes. It becomes less a sport and is seen more as training for the personality. Scars from these duels are highly prized.

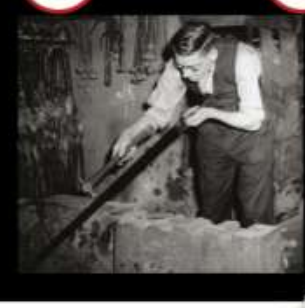
c.1100 — 1500 — c.1600 — c.1700 — 1896 — 1939 — 1967

THE FLOWER OF BATTLE C.1409

Fiore dei Liberi writes *The Flower of Battle*, a medieval treatise on the art of swordsmanship. The work becomes particularly influential in the Italian school of sword fighting.

EPEE FENCING 1860

Epee fencing is introduced in France in order to get closer to the conditions of a real duel as the foil is deemed to be too artificial.



SWORD OF STALINGRAD 1943

This bejewelled ceremonial longsword is ordered by the British as a gift for the Soviet people after the Battle of Stalingrad.

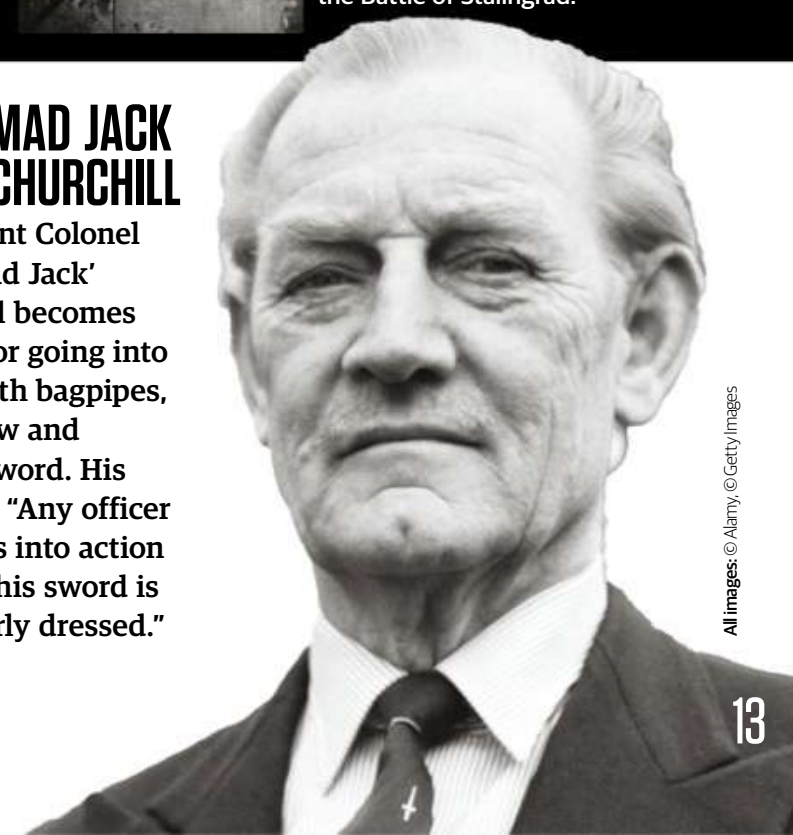
1896 SUMMER OLYMPICS

The first modern Olympic games sees fencing included among the various sports. Held at the Zappeion in Athens, a vast exhibition hall, the men's tournament consists of foil and sabre events. Epee is not included until four years later at the 1900 Olympics.

The sabre is the only weapon to have been at every Olympics since its inception

1939 MAD JACK CHURCHILL

Lieutenant Colonel John 'Mad Jack' Churchill becomes known for going into battle with bagpipes, a longbow and a broadsword. His motto is: "Any officer who goes into action without his sword is improperly dressed."



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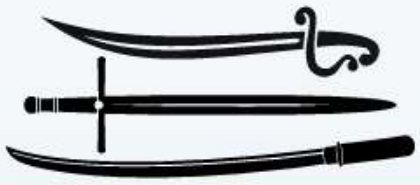


Inside History

MEDIEVAL SWORDSMITH

Europe
C.1066 – 1500

During the early medieval period the art of the swordsmith, or bladesmith, was a highly valued skill and an art form in its own right. The sword was an important part of a warrior's life, sometimes with an almost magical significance. For example, stories surrounding King Arthur's legendary 'sword in the stone' began to spread during the medieval period.

The swordsmith or bladesmith was essentially a specialist blacksmith utilising many of the same tools and processes. Every sword would have the same basic components: pommel, hilt, crossguard and, of course, the blade – which would have been made in a forge. Forging was the main means through which a sword would have been made. This process involved the constant heating of steel in a vast furnace (from where the forge took its name), with the sword being crafted by the smith consistently beating it with a hammer. Initially swords were made with iron but soon the creation of steel became an important part of the sword-making process.

The weapons of some particular swordsmiths were highly valued. The renowned Ulfberht swords of the 9th to 11th centuries were crafted by an unknown craftsman whose name was still used to mark the weapons by a workshop after his death. The price of the sword would depend on the quality of the materials used in the construction of the blade and the skill of the swordsmith forging it.

BELLOWS
During the medieval period, bellows would have been made out of leather and wood. They would have been used to blow air into the furnace to make it reach a higher temperature in order to heat the steel, allowing it to be formed into a particular shape. The bellows would usually be operated by a young apprentice and the task could take hours.

ANVIL
Once the steel had been heated and forged the swordsmith would use an anvil on which to shape the blade. The sword would be beaten into shape, and the anvil itself would most likely have been crafted from iron. Medieval anvils are now very rare, though a number of manuscripts contain illustrations as to what they may have looked like.

GRINDING WHEEL
The grinding wheel would have been used during the final stage of making the blade in order to sharpen it. Most of the wheels would have a pedal that could be used to turn it. The blade would be held against the spinning stone wheel and sharpened. Later in the medieval period, water power would be used in order to turn finishing grinders.

HAMMERS
Hammers would have been used by the bladesmith during the shaping of the weapon and to strengthen the weapon. As waterpower became increasingly common practice it would be used not only to operate the grinding wheels and bellows but also for water-powered hammers, called a trip hammer, to forge some blades.

FORGE (FURNACE)
The swordsmith would have most likely used charcoal to fuel the furnace due to its relative cheapness. How the steel was forged would have depended on the region, with Japanese swordsmiths renowned for folding steel when making katanas.

SLEDGEHAMMER
No blacksmith's workshop would have been complete without a large heavy-duty sledgehammer, though this would not have been used by a bladesmith for sword-making. The sledgehammer would instead have been used exclusively in the construction of larger items, such as the anvil.

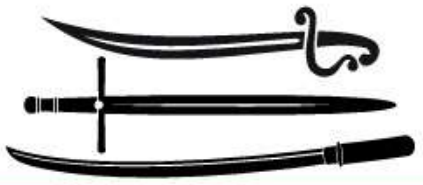
COOLING TANK
The cooling tank would essentially be a large trough of water. The hot blade would be very quickly dunked into the trough in order to harden it - this process is known as quenching the blade. The blade would then have been heated up and slowly cooled down through a process known as tempering, which would create flexibility.

SWAGE BLOCK
With the help of a hammer, the swage block could be used to mould the metal in a variety of ways including shaping, bending and cutting it. A specific type of swage tool would be used by the swordsmith in order to add the distinctive groove down the centre of the blade, the 'fuller'. This groove would help widen and lighten the blade.

TONGS
These long iron pincers would have been used for lifting the steel to and from the anvil and the forge, as well as for pushing the steel deeper into the furnace. They would also have been used for bending or twisting the metal during the process of shaping the blade.

CHISELS
The medieval blacksmith's chisel would have been particularly useful for adding decoration to a variety of items. In sword-making they may have been used in decorating the sword's handle or for adding the maker's mark somewhere on the 'tang' (the back section of the blade, usually hidden by the handle).

Illustration by: Adrian Mann



Anatomy

SAMURAI WARRIOR

Japan
12th – 19th century

KABUTO

The kabuto was the helmet of the samurai. There were various types over the centuries, with the central dome section often being constructed out of a series of metal plates. The helmet would often have a crest, or maidate, fixed to it that would show the allegiance of the samurai.

MENGU

Also known as men-yoroi, there were four different types of mengu, each giving protection to a different part of the face. These masks were designed with demonic facial expressions, often adorned with moustaches or fangs. They were mostly constructed out of leather or iron.

KATANA

The katana sword became associated with the samurai following Toyotomi Hideyoshi's 1588 declaration that only the warrior class could carry weapons. The katana had a blade 60cm long and was known for its ability to be drawn quickly from its sash (obi), allowing the warrior to draw and strike in one swift move.

DOU

The chest armour of the samurai. Usually the dou were made out of leather and iron scales woven together, unlike western chest armour that was often a single piece. The armour would be given a lacquer finish to protect it from the weather.

KOTE

One of the three 'sangu', the sections of armour that protected the extremities of the samurai warrior, the kote was made out of separate sections covering different parts of the arm. Considered to be less important than the body armour or helmet, very few kote still survive.

KOGAKE

These armoured coverings protected the feet of the samurai warrior. Worn over the shoes, kogake were tied in place at the warrior's ankle and were made out of iron plates, which allowed movement through a series of hinges. Suneate protected the samurai's shins.

WAKIZASHI

The samurai's pair of swords was known as the daishō, roughly translating as 'great and small'. The latter of these, the wakizashi, was often used for close-quarters combat due to its smaller size. The wakizashi was also known to be used in seppuku – ritual suicide, which involved disembowelment.

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

THE SWORD OF GOUJIAN

This copper sword was owned by a legendary Chinese king China, C.496 – 465 BCE

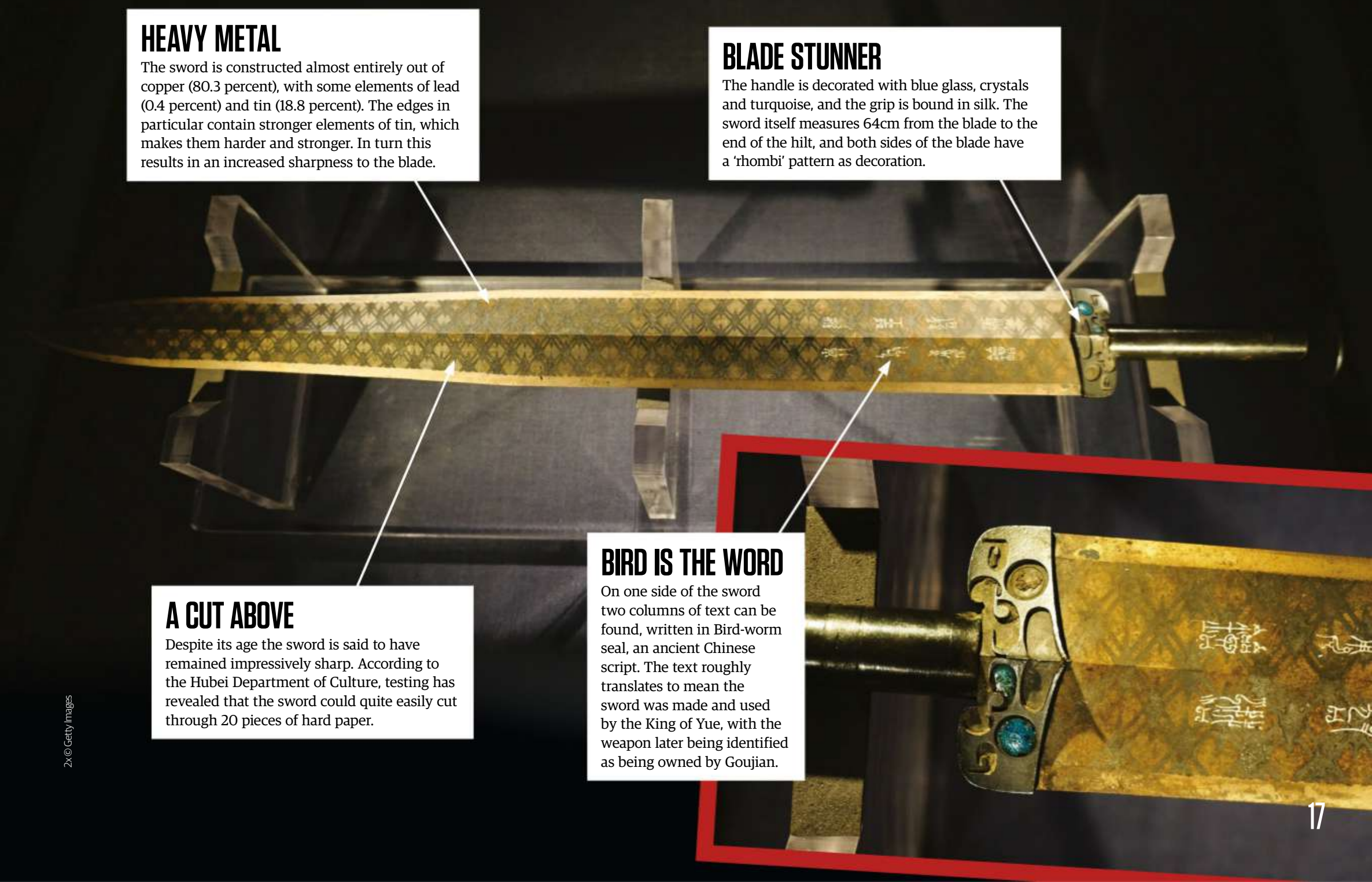
In 1965 Chinese archaeologists discovered something astounding among a hoard of some 2,000 artefacts in one tomb out of a complex of 50. Found, seemingly abandoned and forgotten next to a human skeleton, was a sword sheathed in a wooden scabbard. The tomb complex was hidden in an aqueduct of the Zhang River Reservoir in Jingzhou, China, and had been submerged for thousands of years. No one expected the sword hidden inside to be in good condition, but what emerged astounded the researchers.

The sword was made from copper and golden in colour, having been almost completely unharmed by the years underwater. The scabbard, having been finished in black lacquer, had helped protect the sword and it remains a remarkable example of a weapon surviving some 2,500 years. Not only this, but the sword was discovered to have belonged to a legendary Chinese king of the Spring and Autumn periods: it was supposedly made and owned by Goujian, the king of Yue between 496 and 465 BCE.

His reign is remembered for his victory over the state of Wu, during what is regarded as one of the last crucial conflicts of the Spring and Autumn period. At the time Goujian was in his early twenties and the counterattacks he launched on Wu during the war were known for their ferociousness and brutality.

Like much of Chinese history from this period, the story of Goujian has taken on a mythical quality and it is said that he served as the servant of his enemy for three years before returning to his kingdom and slowly building up his forces for the final battle. Fuchai, Wu's monarch, attempted to surrender but Goujian refused his request and Fuchai killed himself rather than face the wrath of his enemy. Goujian is said to have foregone kingly luxuries, eating gruel, sleeping on a bed of sticks and forcing himself to taste bile to remind himself of his humiliation when serving under his enemy Fuchai.

Goujian's sword was banned from ever leaving China for display after it was damaged while on loan in Singapore in the early 2000s. Today it can be seen at the Hubei Provincial Museum.



HEAVY METAL

The sword is constructed almost entirely out of copper (80.3 percent), with some elements of lead (0.4 percent) and tin (18.8 percent). The edges in particular contain stronger elements of tin, which makes them harder and stronger. In turn this results in an increased sharpness to the blade.

BLADE STUNNER

The handle is decorated with blue glass, crystals and turquoise, and the grip is bound in silk. The sword itself measures 64cm from the blade to the end of the hilt, and both sides of the blade have a 'rhombi' pattern as decoration.

A CUT ABOVE

Despite its age the sword is said to have remained impressively sharp. According to the Hubei Department of Culture, testing has revealed that the sword could quite easily cut through 20 pieces of hard paper.

BIRD IS THE WORD

On one side of the sword two columns of text can be found, written in Bird-worm seal, an ancient Chinese script. The text roughly translates to mean the sword was made and used by the King of Yue, with the weapon later being identified as being owned by Goujian.

2x © Getty Images

GREAT SWORD FIGHTERS

Some duelled for entertainment and others to the death – here are ten of history's superior swordsmen and women

Miyamoto Musashi
Japanese, 1584 – 1645

Probably the most famous Japanese swordsman of all time, Miyamoto Musashi was a rōnin, philosopher and writer. Musashi claimed to have remained undefeated throughout 21 duels in his career. His most famous occurred in 1612 on a small island when he faced his nemesis Sasaki Kojirō. Musashi fashioned a wooden sword out of an oar and upon making landfall felled Kojirō with a single blow. Following this he retired from the life of a swordsman, only returning to the field of battle to assist in the suppression of the 1637 Shimabara Rebellion.

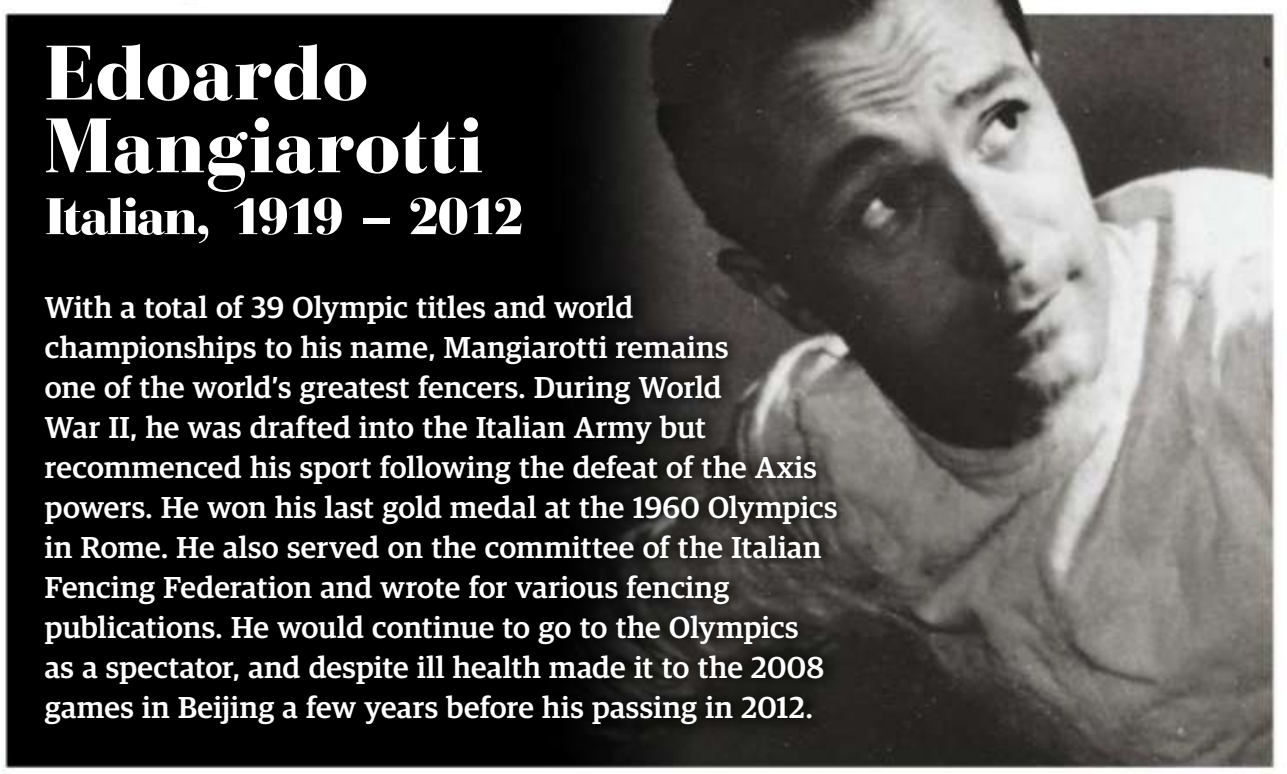
Miyamoto Musashi is said to have first killed a man at the age of just 13

HATTORI HANZO
JAPANESE, 1542-97

Hattori Hanzo was a legendary 16th century samurai warrior who was known to be a fierce swordsman. Beginning his samurai training at eight years old, he very quickly rose to prominence on the battlefield. A renowned tactician as well as a formidable fighter, he earned the nickname 'Demon Hanzo' due to the way he would stalk his victims. Quentin Tarantino borrowed the name Hattori Hanzo for a character in his 2003 film *Kill Bill*.

Edoardo Mangiarotti
Italian, 1919 – 2012

With a total of 39 Olympic titles and world championships to his name, Mangiarotti remains one of the world's greatest fencers. During World War II, he was drafted into the Italian Army but recommenced his sport following the defeat of the Axis powers. He won his last gold medal at the 1960 Olympics in Rome. He also served on the committee of the Italian Fencing Federation and wrote for various fencing publications. He would continue to go to the Olympics as a spectator, and despite ill health made it to the 2008 games in Beijing a few years before his passing in 2012.



FRED CAVENS
BELGIAN, 1882 – 1962

A Belgian-born fencing master, Cavens rose to prominence teaching the finer points of sword fighting to the stars of golden-age Hollywood such as Douglas Fairbanks, Basil Rathbone and Errol Flynn. Perhaps the most famous film he worked on was 1934's *The Count of Monte Cristo*, which made him the go-to fencing instructor in Hollywood and simultaneously reignited interest in the swashbuckling sub-genre. Although there were fewer opportunities for work during the 1950s, Caven switched to television with the successful *Zorro* series for Walt Disney.

GYÖRGY THURY
HUNGARIAN, 1519-71

Hungary's most famous duelist, contemporary sources state he won some 600 duels. Thury was captain of Palota Castle, an important position as the castle was located along the Hungarian border where the armies of the Ottoman Empire could strike at any time. Often sleeping among the horses, Thury was a man who enjoyed simple tastes and was feared by the Ottoman forces. Many of his deeds have been popularised in folk tales and songs.

Aladar Gerevich
Hungarian, 1910-91

The winner of seven Olympic gold medals, Aladar Gerevich is a true fencing legend. He won six successive golds at the sabre team event between 1936 and 1960. After being told that he was too old to participate in the 1960 Olympics on the Hungarian team, the 50-year-old Gerevich challenged the entire team and beat them all single-handedly. He was quickly selected. His Olympic career was interrupted by the outbreak of World War II, though he recommenced his career following the defeat of Nazi Germany.

Famously, on 9 April 1787, Bologne duelled with the Chevalier d'Eon, who at the time was living as a woman

Joseph Bologne
Guadeloupean, 1745-99

Nicknamed the 'Black Mozart, Bologne was best known as a composer but was also a formidable swordsman. Born on the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe in 1745, he was renowned as the best fencer in France and was said to have only lost one match. During the French Revolutionary Wars he served in the military as a colonel and leader of the Légion Franche de Cavalerie des Américains (American Free Legion of Calvary). In 1793 he would be jailed on charges of misuse of public funds. Likely false imprisonment, it is suspected that despite his military victories his ties to the French aristocracy did him no favours with the revolutionary government.

MINAMOTO NO YOSHITSUNE
JAPANESE, 1159-89

Minamoto no Yoshitsune is a popular figure of Japanese history and folk tales. A military leader of the Minamoto clan, Yoshitsune was a fearsome warrior and an expert swordsman. One legend has Yoshitsune encounter the warrior monk Benkei, whom he defeated during an epic duel. Following this confrontation Benkei would serve and become a close friend of Yoshitsune, with a variety of stories, poems and songs telling of their adventures together.

RALPH FAULKNER
AMERICAN, 1891 – 1987

Ralph Faulkner began as an actor in the silent film era, but after injuring his knee he took up fencing during his recovery. He participated in both the 1928 and 1932 Olympics in Amsterdam and Los Angeles respectively. He opened his own fencing school, Falcon Studios, where he taught numerous champions. He also regularly trained actors in fencing for film productions. He continued teaching until he died at the ripe old age of 95.

Mademoiselle de Maupin
Actor, c.1670 – 1707

Better known by the title Mademoiselle de Maupin, Julie d'Aubigny was a famous opera singer as well as master swordswoman. At one point in her life she fell in love with a master swordsman and the two fled from Paris to Marseille. During their travels, De Maupin would dress in men's clothing and the two would stage sword fights in various bars for money. They began to incorporate singing, leading to De Maupin's opera career. She would challenge numerous men to duels and is sometimes alleged to have killed ten during these deadly battles. An 1835 novel by Théophile Gautier loosely based on De Aubigny's life would popularise the story.

Mademoiselle de Maupin (real name Julie d'Aubigny) was said to have begun her fencing training at 12 years old

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

Q&A

EVOLUTION OF THE LONGSWORD

Historian Neil Grant explains how two-handed swords became important weapons on medieval battlefields

What were some key types of swords during the medieval period?

By 1000, Viking-era swords with wide, heavy blades, short grips and relatively light pommels with the balance toward the point for slashing cuts had evolved into the classic 'knightly' sword with larger, heavier pommels on longer grips, re-balancing the weapon for both cut and thrust, while points became more acute to better penetrate mail.

From there, swords developed in various directions for specific tasks or to deal with opponents wearing more and better armour. The Falchion became a short, heavy, single-edged weapon, capable of delivering powerful cuts but of limited use for thrusting.

By contrast, Arming Swords developed more tapered blades and acute points, better optimised for thrusting while remaining capable of delivering useful cuts, while others such as the Estoc become almost pure thrusting weapons with blunt edges.

Better armour meant shields became less necessary, so swords which could be used in both hands to deliver more powerful strikes began to appear, such as longswords and true two-handed swords.

What is a longsword and how was it different from other swords?

Longswords have longer blades than single-handed swords, but also have longer grips that allow them to be used in two hands if necessary, while remaining shorter and lighter than real two-handed swords.

Its great advantage was versatility. It was light enough to use one-handed, alone or with a small parrying buckler, or when mounted. Alternatively, it could be used two-handed to deliver very powerful cuts, turning the hips and shoulders to deliver maximum impact.

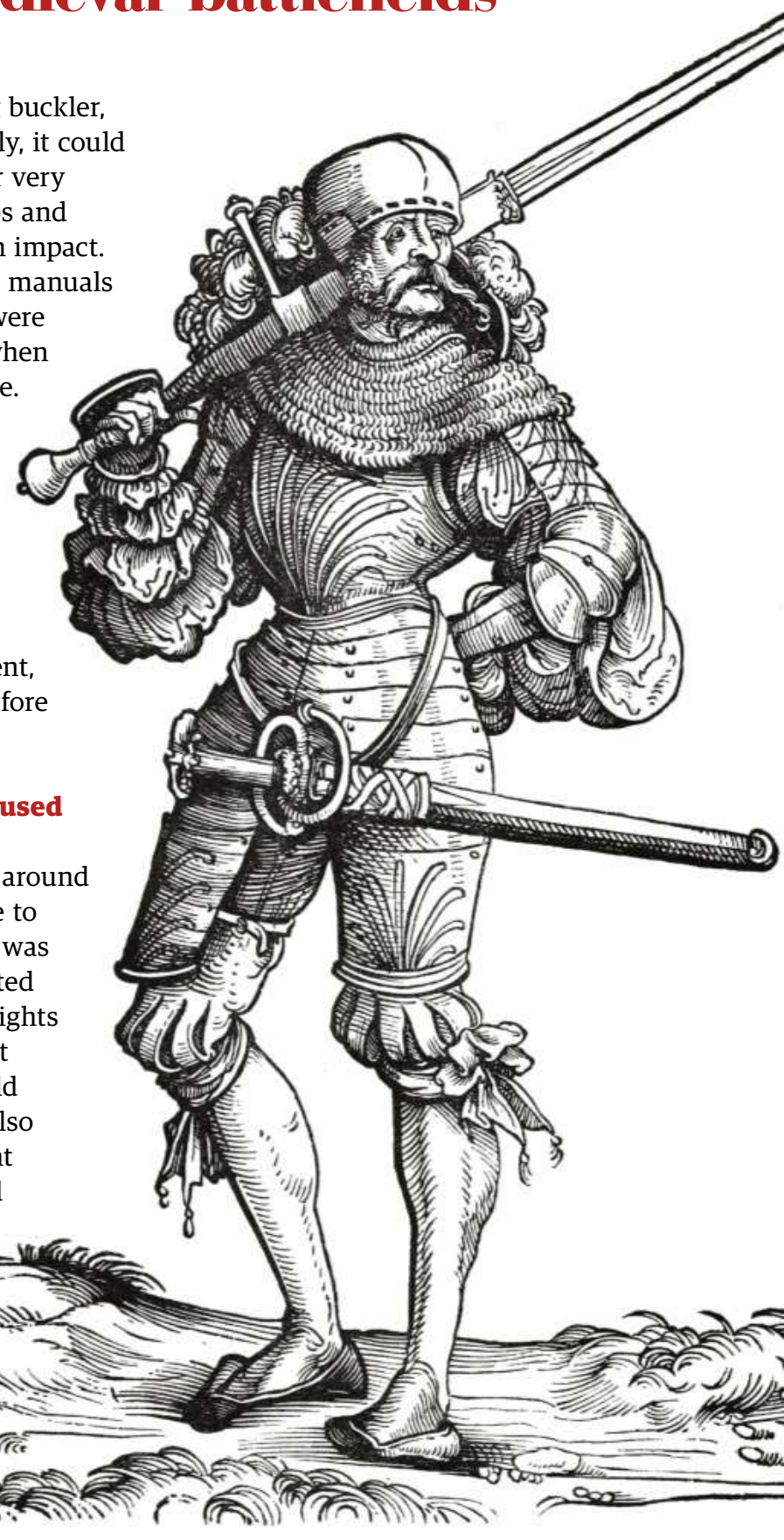
Surviving medieval fighting manuals show specialised techniques were taught to use the longsword when fighting opponents in full plate. These included using the left hand on the middle of the blade (so-called half-sword techniques) to deliver hard, accurate thrusts at vulnerable gaps in the armour. Every part of the sword was used to knock down or trip an opponent, so they could be dealt with before they could regain their feet.

When did it first start to be used in combat?

Longswords became common around 1300, apparently as a response to improved armour, where mail was being increasingly supplemented by solid plates. This meant knights dispensed with shields for foot combat, allowing them to wield two-handed weapons, and it also meant opponents in equivalent armour required the increased impact from these weapons to put them down.

Longswords also benefitted from the improvements in metallurgy that allowed better armour, which also made it cheaper

Neil Grant is a military history expert who works with English Heritage and is on the Board of Trustees of Royal Armouries Museum. His books include a series of weapon-specific titles such as *The Medieval Longsword*, *The Luger*, *Mauser Military Rifles* and *The Lewis Gun*, all published by Osprey Publishing.



RIGHT A German mercenary holding a Zweihander (which translates simply as two-hander), from around 1535

Photo courtesy of: Osprey

and easier to produce longer sword blades. Longswords never replaced all other swords, and many of the other types above continued to be used alongside them.

How did the longsword help change combat in the Middle Ages?

The longsword wasn't a game-changing weapon on the battlefield, as the English longbow was in the 1340s or the widespread adoption of gunpowder weapons after 1500. It was mostly a secondary weapon – a mounted knight relied on the charge with lance, but once his lance was broken or embedded in the initial target, he drew a longsword for close combat, or even as a 'short lance' in a second charge.

Equally, longswords were light enough that archers could carry one on the belt for when enemies reached their lines and bows became useless. It came to the fore in chivalric or judicial duels, however; medieval fighting manuals show that it was the primary weapon for these single combats in armour, which might be 'sporting' events equivalent to mounted jousts or might be fought to the death with no quarter asked or given.

How does the longsword evolve throughout the medieval period?

Medieval weapons were not made to standard patterns, and though there are trends driven by changes in armour or in expected tactical use, most men selected something that suited their physique and personal tastes.

Early longswords resembled large single-handed swords, with broad straight blades to deliver strong cuts. After 1350, blades tapered notably to sharp points and gained diamond cross-sections, creating strong rigid thrusting weapons to fight opponents wearing plate armour.

Finally, from 1400 most become 'all purpose', with sharp points for thrusting but wide enough blades to also cut well.

Some fighting manuals show specialised longswords with unusual features, including very long sharply tapered weapons with spiked pommels and crossguards being used in an armoured duel, but these were for very particular situations rather than general-purpose weapons.

How important is the sword to the medieval period?

Weapons generally – not just swords – were very important in the medieval period. Most surviving medieval weapons laws are not about restricting weapons but about requiring people to own and practise with weapons.

However, this doesn't mean people routinely carried them. Most towns strongly restricted people (including nobles) carrying weapons except to militia training or fencing schools, and wearing swords with civilian clothes didn't become normal until the Tudor period, when duelling became much more common.

The sword definitely had special symbolic importance, however, especially as its cruciform shape carried an obvious religious symbolism. Swords were used in the dubbing ceremony to create new knights and large 'bearing swords' were carried in procession before kings or nobles as symbols of authority. The sword symbolises war: enemies are "put to the sword" and it is not coincidental that King Arthur proves his right to rule in the c.15th century tale by drawing a sword from the stone.

Stories such as that of Arthur pulling Excalibur from a stone indicate how swords were taking on increasing symbolic importance

THE MEDIEVAL LONGSWORD
IS OUT NOW FROM OSPREY PUBLISHING

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CUTTING-EDGE MUSEUMS

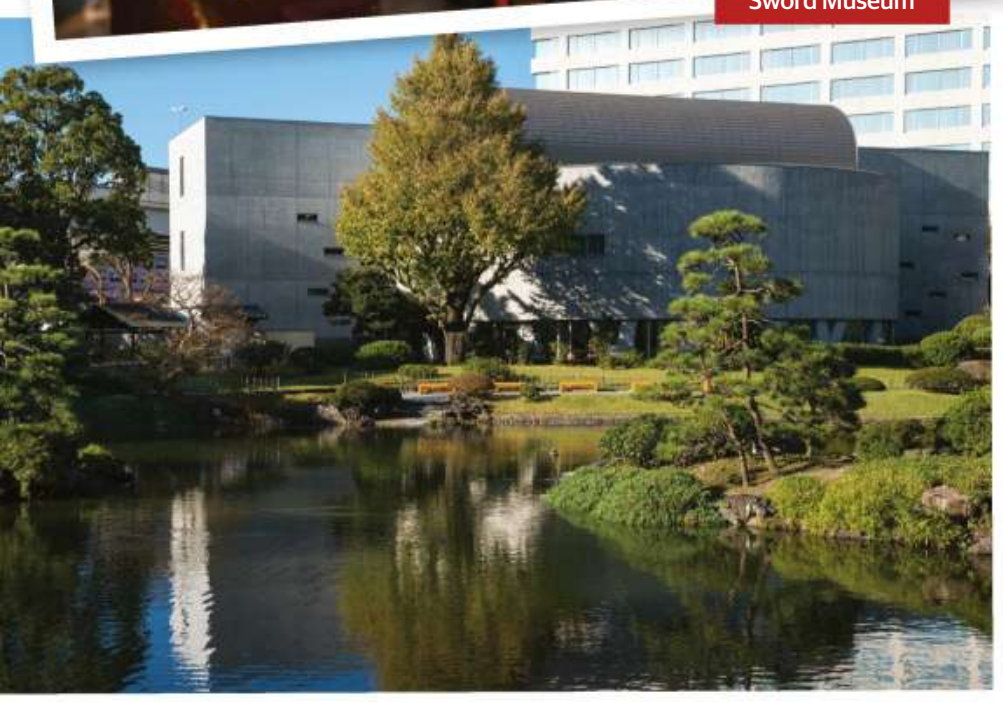
The museums and armouries around the world for sword enthusiasts

1 JAPANESE SWORD MUSEUM
TOKYO, JAPAN

Originally founded in 1978, the Japanese Sword Museum aims to share the proud heritage of Japanese sword-making, design and use with its visitors. First based in the Yoyogi district of Shinjuku ward, Tokyo, the museum's collection was moved to a larger museum near Ryogoku in 2018. Run by the Society for the Preservation of Japanese Art Swords, the museum displays swords as works of art rather than as weapons, and exhibitions emphasise the significant place swords hold in Japan's cultural history. The museum building was designed by prominent architect Fumihiko Maki and has three floors that showcase exhibitions. With swords made by master craftsmen, some dating back 800 years, the collection includes examples of katana, tachi, yari and wakizashi blades, among others. One of the prized exhibits of the collection is the sword used by the daimyo (Japanese feudal lord) Uesugi Kenshin in the 16th century. Kenshin's military exploits earned him the nickname 'God of War'.

Open Tuesday to Sunday from 9.30am - 5pm

The Japanese Sword Museum



2 SEKI TRADITIONAL SWORDSMITH MUSEUM
GIFU, JAPAN

Seki swordsmiths at work

Aiming to educate its visitors on the history and culture of sword-making in Japan, the Seki Traditional Swordsmith Museum has a wide range of exhibitions. Based in Seki City, the museum's biggest draw is that it holds live exhibitions where the skills of the Seki blacksmiths are showcased. The traditional sword-making techniques of the blacksmiths date back to the 12th century, and visitors can watch as they work in the museum's demonstration hall. Every January, the annual Uchizome-shiki ceremony takes place at the museum to mark the first forging of the year. Alongside the impressive live exhibitions of sword-making, the museum also displays examples of Japanese swords as well as showing informative videos and displaying materials used by swordsmiths in the manufacturing process. To highlight the continuation of the Seki blacksmiths' craftsmanship into the present day, there is also an exhibition dedicated to modern knife products such as kitchen knives and scissors.

Open Wednesday to Monday from 9am - 4.30pm

The Royal Armouries in Leeds

The Hall of Steel

3 ROYAL ARMOURIES MUSEUM
LEEDS, UK

Home to the UK's national collection of arms and armour, the Royal Armouries is located in a purpose-built museum in central Leeds in West Yorkshire. Originally held at the Tower of London, the collection has existed as long as the Tower itself. However, as the collection grew too large to be accommodated at the Tower, it was moved to Fort Nelson near Portsmouth. The Tower kept the objects that related directly to its history, and Fort Nelson eventually just housed the artillery collection of the Armouries. When the new museum opened in Leeds in 1996, the bulk of the Royal Armouries was put on display. The aim of the museum was to not only display the collection, but to also educate visitors about the development of arms and armour throughout history through interactive exhibitions and live performances. An outside yard allows the museum to put on performances such as displays of jousting and falconry. Workshops are also on site which repair arms. Thousands of swords are exhibited at the Royal Armouries, along with rare and fascinating objects including an 18th century suit of mail and plate armour for an elephant, acquired in India. For sword enthusiasts, the Hall of Steel is a highlight – the architectural centrepiece of the building displays 2,700 pieces of military equipment including plenty of swords.

Open 10am – 5pm every day in the summer; Weds to Sun from 10am –5pm during the rest of the year

4 ARMS AND ARMORY, MET MUSEUM
NEW YORK, USA

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York holds a large collection of weaponry in its Arms and Armory department. First established in 1912, the department was set up as a home for the various acquisitions the museum had made in this field since 1896. In 1904, the museum purchased two vast collections: one of Japanese arms and armour, and one of European arms and armour. Since then, through acquisitions and gifts, the collection has expanded and is now one of the most popular attractions inside the Met. The department's website says its goal is to "collect, preserve, research, publish, and exhibit distinguished examples representing the art of the armorer, swordsmith, and gunmaker." For sword enthusiasts, there is a wide variety on display, including the 350 swords and daggers donated to the Museum by Jean Jacques Reubell, a Parisian collector, in 1926 in honour of his wife and mother who were both New Yorkers.

The Arms and Armory department at the Met

Open Sun to Tues and Thurs from 10am – 5pm, and Fri to Sat from 10am – 9pm

5 ROYAL ARMOURY OF TURIN
TURIN, ITALY

The armoury at Turin was first put together by King Charles Albert of Sardinia in 1832. Housed in the Beaumont Gallery at the Royal Palace at Turin, Charles Albert's collection consisted of arms from the arsenals of Turin and Genoa, as well as medieval objects owned by the kings of Savoy which they had either used or had been acquired as diplomatic gifts. The armoury opened to the public in 1837. Additions to the armoury included oriental weapons from the Carlo Albertino museum in 1842 and donations from the personal collections of Charles Albert and Victor Emmanuel II after 1878. The site of the armoury expanded to accommodate the growing collection, with the Rotonda, designed by Pelagio Palagi, being added in 1842. The armoury now makes up a significant part of the Royal Museums of Turin, which also consists of the Royal Palace, the Archaeological Museum, the Sabauda Gallery and the Royal Library. The Royal Museums were made a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997. Encompassing 5,000 objects, the collection at the Armoury showcases weapons and armour from prehistory to the 20th century. Some of the impressive swords on display include the sword of San Maurizio and the sword used by Napoleon Bonaparte at the Battle of Marengo in 1800.

Open Tues to Sun from 9am – 7pm

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The Beaumont Gallery

The Royal Palace of Turin

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MARY vs E

LIZABETH

How the battle between the queens reshaped the English monarchy

Written by Tracy Borman

© Lorentz Gullachsen

EXPERT BIO

DR TRACY BORMAN

Tracy Borman is a Tudor historian, author and broadcaster. She wrote about Mary and Elizabeth's relationship in her book *Elizabeth's Women: The Hidden Story of the Virgin Queen*. Her latest book is *Crown & Sceptre: 1,000 Years of Kings and Queens*.

Illustration by: Joe Cummings

MARY I TIMELINE

Key events in the life of Henry VIII's eldest child

18 February 1516
Mary born
Daughter of King Henry VIII and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, Princess Mary is born at the Palace of Placentia in Greenwich, London.

1525
Princess of Wales
Mary is sent to Ludlow to preside over the Council of Wales and the Marches. She is referred to as the Princess of Wales but is never officially granted the title.

25 January 1533
Henry weds Anne Boleyn
Having secretly married in November of the previous year, an official ceremony is held and later, in May, Henry's marriage to Catherine is annulled by Archbishop Cranmer.

7 September 1533
Princess Elizabeth born
Henry VIII has a second daughter, much to his continued frustration. Elizabeth is brought up at Hatfield and her mother Anne is killed before she turns three years old.

November 1534
Acts of Supremacy
Officially breaking from the Vatican, the king has Cardinal Wolsey and Parliament draw up a new act that proclaims the monarch to be "the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England".

12 October 1537
Prince Edward born
Now married to his third wife, Jane Seymour, Henry finally has a son in Edward, although Seymour dies 12 days later.

14 July 1543
Act of Succession
After the aging king marries Catherine Parr, his sixth and final wife, he relents to the idea of restoring his two daughters to the line of succession behind his son Edward.

Mary I and her sister Elizabeth had little in common except their father: Henry VIII. Mary was a staunch Catholic, Elizabeth a devout Protestant. Mary was deeply conventional in her views of women and took a husband as soon as she ascended the throne, Elizabeth was determined never to marry and became the Virgin Queen of legend. Mary's reign was brief and brutal, Elizabeth's has been celebrated as one of the longest and most successful of any British monarch. They may have been opposites but the relationship between the two sisters would have a profound impact on the queenship of both.

At 4am on 18 February 1516, Catherine of Aragon was delivered of a daughter. The child might not have been the son that her husband Henry VIII so craved but she was at least healthy and, given Catherine's experience of childbirth, that was something to be thankful for. A lavish christening was held three days later at the Church of the Observant Friars, attended by the highest-ranking members of the court. The king's infant daughter was named Mary.

Mary enjoyed a pampered upbringing. As the king's cherished only child she was "much beloved by her father," according to the Venetian ambassador. She was fêted at court and proudly shown off to foreign ambassadors, who all praised her appearance and intelligence. Her long red hair was "as beautiful as ever seen on human head." Gasparo Spinelli, a Venetian dignitary, told of how the little princess had danced with the French ambassador, "who considered her very handsome, and admirable by reason of her great and uncommon mental endowments." During her early years, Mary learned the typical courtly accomplishments of playing the lute and virginals, singing, dancing and riding. She also received an excellent education at the hands of Juan Luis Vives, a celebrated humanist scholar.

After a two-year sojourn in Wales Mary returned to court in 1527, aged 11. But by then everything had changed. For the past year her father had been obsessed with one of her mother's ladies-in-waiting. Anne Boleyn was a fiery young woman who'd arrived from the French court in 1522. Having seen how quickly the English king's mistresses were discarded (her own sister included), Anne refused to sleep with him, which drove Henry wild with frustrated lust. Soon, he began to think the unthinkable: that he would set aside Catherine and marry Anne.

ABOVE A portrait of Mary as a child – she was apparently much loved by her father at the time

Years of futile negotiations with the papacy for annulment followed until Henry took matters into his own hands and separated England from Rome, creating a new church over which he was supreme head. Turbulence and destruction followed for years afterwards, tearing the country apart and pitting traditional Catholics against those following the new faith.

Mary fell firmly in the former camp. She had stood by her mother Catherine throughout this time, refusing to recognise Anne (whom she called the "Concubine") as the rightful queen or her father as head of the new church. Neither did she accept her half-sister Elizabeth – born to Anne and Henry in September 1533 – as the rightful heir.

Having been declared illegitimate after the annulment of her parents' marriage,

"Mary suffered the humiliation of being forced to join her infant sister's household"

Mary suffered the humiliation of being forced to join her infant sister's household, where she remained for several years. It is to her credit that after Anne's dramatic fall from grace in 1536 Mary took her young sister under her wing and showed her the love and affection of a protective older sister. United in their illegitimacy (Anne's marriage to Henry had been annulled just prior to her execution), the two daughters were now on an equal footing for the first time and this improved their relationship considerably. They remained close throughout Elizabeth's childhood, although religion became a source of tension: Mary was staunchly Catholic while Elizabeth had been raised in the new reformed faith. This tension would become ever more pronounced in the years ahead.

After their father's death in 1547, his 'precious jewel', Edward, became king at the age of just nine. Staunchly Protestant, he favoured his younger half-sister Elizabeth, while Mary, who refused to give up her Catholic beliefs, found herself out in the cold. Upon his deathbed just six years later, Edward changed the succession in favour of his cousin, Lady Jane Grey, in order to prevent his Catholic half-sister from taking the throne. But the people did not take kindly to a usurper and Mary soon ousted the 'Nine Days' Queen', as Jane became known. Mary was proclaimed queen on 19 July 1553 amid wild rejoicing.

But simmering beneath the public celebrations was widespread unease at the prospect of a queen regnant. "To promote a woman to bear rule... is repugnant to nature... the subversion of good order, of all equity and justice," railed the Protestant preacher John Knox. Women, he argued, were "weak, frail, impatient, feeble and foolish." Lady Jane Grey aside, Mary Tudor was England's first queen regnant for almost 400 years. The last incumbent, Empress Matilda, had held onto power for

TOP The annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon officially made Mary illegitimate, although she would be brought back into the line of succession

ABOVE Henry VIII depicted with his three legitimate children and their jester Will Sommers, in the background

28 January 1547
Henry VIII dies
With his health ailing for some time, Henry VIII dies but leaves little by way of succession planning for his government or the new king, Edward VI, who is just nine years old.

19 July 1553
Mary proclaimed queen
Following the untimely death of her half-brother Edward VI, and a short-lived claim by Lady Jane Grey, Mary is proclaimed the new monarch.

1 October 1553
Mary is crowned
After riding into London in August with her half-sister Elizabeth and 800 supporting nobles, Mary is crowned at Westminster Abbey.

18 March 1554
Elizabeth imprisoned
Following a rebel plot organised by Sir Thomas Wyatt to put Elizabeth on the throne, Mary imprisons her sister in the Tower of London, but no evidence is found against her.

25 July 1554
Marriage to Prince Philip
Mary marries Prince Philip, the son of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Such a marriage potentially blocks her Protestant half-sister's position as heir.

Sep 1554
The false pregnancy
Around September 1554 Mary's menstruation cycle stops – she then begins gaining weight and having bouts of nausea. However, it turns out not to be the case, leaving Mary distraught.

February 1555
Burning Protestants
The restoration of Roman Catholicism in England leads to the return of the Heresy Acts. With religious doctrine on her side, Mary starts executing Protestant nobles.

March 1557
England drawn into war
Philip draws England into war with France following the abdication of his father Charles V. The war is a disaster for England and leads to the loss of Calais in 1558.

17 November 1558
The queen is dead
In 1558 Mary names Elizabeth as her lawful successor. Mary falls ill during an influenza pandemic that is gripping London and dies not long after.

All images: © Alamy

ABOVE-LEFT Mary eventually took Elizabeth into her care once the siblings were on an equal footing

ABOVE Lady Jane Grey was briefly declared queen, but Mary successfully argued for her right to succeed Edward VI and was much more popular at the time

"AS QUEEN, MARY MADE IT CLEAR THAT SHE INTENDED TO RETURN ENGLAND TO THE PAPAL FOLD"

only a few months and had plunged the country into civil war. It was hardly an inspiring example of female sovereignty. "A woman is never feared or respected as a man is, whatever her rank," said Mary, Queen Dowager of Hungary to Charles V, when resigning her regency. Little wonder that Henry VIII had been so desperate to sire a legitimate male heir.

On 3 August, the new queen rode in triumph through London, accompanied by her half-sister Elizabeth. On the surface, it was a dazzling expression of family unity. But behind it lay a fierce rivalry between the two siblings. Naturally introspective and lacking her father's ability to charm and enthral the crowds, Mary progressed through them, responding awkwardly to their cheers and appearing distant and aloof. By contrast, Elizabeth, who had inherited her father's gift for public relations, attracted the most attention as she gracefully inclined her head and waved her hand, drawing the loudest cheers. "Her Grace, by holding up her hands and merry countenance to such as stood far off, and most tender and gentle language to those that stood nigh... did declare herself thankfully to receive her people's good will," remarked one bystander.

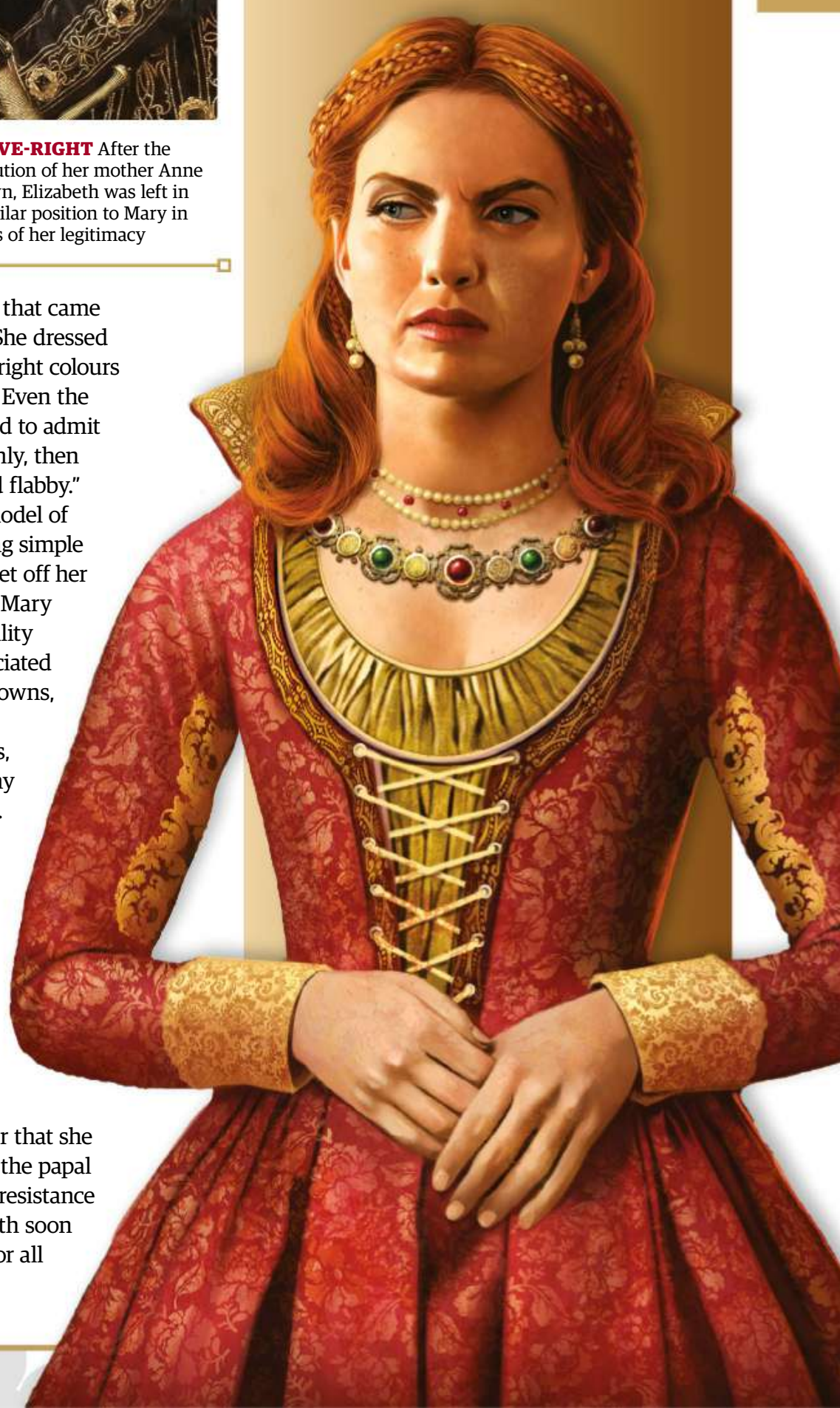
Elizabeth's popularity was enhanced by her appearance. With her "comely" face, long red hair, "fine eyes" and youthful exuberance, she far outshone her sister. Elizabeth was also taller than Mary, who was described as being "of low rather than of middling stature". Although the new queen was only 37, the turmoil and sadness of her youth made her appear much older and her naturally sombre, tight-lipped expression aged her further. "At present, with the exception of some wrinkles, caused more by anxieties than by age, which make her appear some years older, her aspect, for the rest, is very grave," remarked the Venetian ambassador. Her appearance was not helped by the fact that she had lost nearly all her teeth in her 20s. Among her most noticeable features were her eyes, which were so piercing that they "inspire, not only respect, but fear, in those on whom she fixes them." In fact, Mary's tendency to stare intently at people was due more to her severe short-sightedness than an intention to intimidate, but her gruff, deep voice, which was "rough and loud, almost like a man's" did not make her any more appealing.

Although she loved fine clothes and paid a great deal of attention to her wardrobe,

ABOVE King Edward VI favoured his middle sister Elizabeth since they shared their Protestant faith

ABOVE-RIGHT After the execution of her mother Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth was left in a similar position to Mary in terms of her legitimacy

"ELIZABETH SOON BECAME A NATURAL FIGUREHEAD FOR THOSE OPPOSED TO HER HALF-SISTER'S REGIME"



Mary lacked the sense of style that came so naturally to her half-sister. She dressed in richly decorated gowns of bright colours that clashed with her red hair. Even the Spanish ambassador was forced to admit that if she dressed more stylishly, then "she would not look so old and flabby." By contrast, Elizabeth was a model of understated elegance, favouring simple gowns of white or green that set off her colouring to perfection. While Mary was embarrassed by her sexuality and preferred to hide her emaciated figure in heavy, high-necked gowns, Elizabeth flaunted hers with a knowingness beyond her years, exuding a sex appeal that many men at court found irresistible.

There were soon other, graver causes for discord between the two sisters. Even though she was a devout Protestant, Elizabeth was shrewd enough to "adapt herself to the will of her Majesty" – and that will was decidedly Roman Catholic. From the beginning of her reign, Mary made it clear that she intended to return England to the papal fold. This sparked widespread resistance among her people and Elizabeth soon became a natural figurehead for all those opposed to her half-sister's regime. The Imperial ambassador, Simon Renard, warned that Elizabeth was "clever and sly" and might "conceive some dangerous design" against the new queen. Such comments may have been slanderous, but they succeeded in reopening old wounds. "She [Mary] still resents the injuries inflicted on Queen Catherine, her lady mother, by the machinations of Anne Boleyn, mother of Elizabeth," noted Renard. Mary confided to him that she thought Elizabeth would grow to be like her mother, "who had caused great trouble in the Kingdom."

"The new queen rode in triumph through London, accompanied by her half-sister Elizabeth"

But Mary soon had other distractions. Monarchical power was designed for a male ruler and it was not clear whether it could or should apply to a woman. After much political wrangling, in April 1554 parliament passed "An Act for declaring that the Regal power of this realm is in the Queen's Majesty as fully and absolutely as ever it was in any her most noble progenitors kings of this Realm." Put simply, the Act determined that there would be no distinction between men and women with regard to the powers of the crown. This would benefit not just Mary but every subsequent queen regnant – her half-sister Elizabeth included.

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ABOVE Mary riding into London accompanied by the Catholic bishops and 800 nobles to claim her throne

Even though Mary shared the same prejudice against women as her contemporaries, she had what one eyewitness described as "a terrible and obstinate nature" and was determined to assert her authority. This was expressed most forcefully through her unbending resolve to return England to the Roman Catholic fold. While some of her subjects welcomed this, others were fiercely opposed. But Mary was not a woman to compromise and her unflinching pursuit of heretics overshadowed every other aspect of the reign, earning her the sobriquet "Bloody Mary". She mistakenly believed that those of her subjects who refused to conform had been manipulated

> "The queen had failed to appreciate the strength of feeling among her xenophobic people"

by a small group of leaders. If these were removed, then her subjects would realise the error of their ways and return to the Catholic fold. The reinstatement of the 14th century heresy laws in 1555 gave Mary carte blanche to hunt down those whom she believed responsible and condemn them to be burnt at the stake. The first victim was the clergyman-preacher John Rogers, who was consigned to the flames in February 1555. Other high-profile reformers soon followed, notably Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley in October that year, and – most shocking of all – in March 1556 Thomas Cranmer, Henry VIII's archbishop of Canterbury and leader of his Reformation.

Eliminating the Protestant leaders had the opposite effect to the one Mary intended. The horrific manner of their deaths excited sympathy even among religious conservatives and strengthened the resolve of the reformists, who were of a greater number than the queen had judged. Undeterred, she expanded her pursuit of heretics. By the summer of 1558 about 290 people, mostly from the lower classes, had been put to death. The ranks of sympathisers had grown with each burning so that by the end of Mary's reign Protestantism had taken a firmer hold than when she had ascended the throne.

Mary's staunch Catholicism also inspired her choice of husband. Because of her late mother, she felt a natural affinity for Spain and as a child had been betrothed to its king, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Although Charles had subsequently broken their betrothal, his 26-year-old son Philip was still unmarried. As a Catholic prince from her mother's homeland, he was ideal in Mary's eyes. Her council did not agree and feared that England would become a mere satellite of the Spanish empire. On 16 November 1553, a parliamentary delegation formally petitioned the queen to choose an English husband. But Mary would brook no opposition and the marriage settlement was agreed in January 1554.

MARRIAGE MATERIAL

The prospective betrothals that Mary and Elizabeth avoided

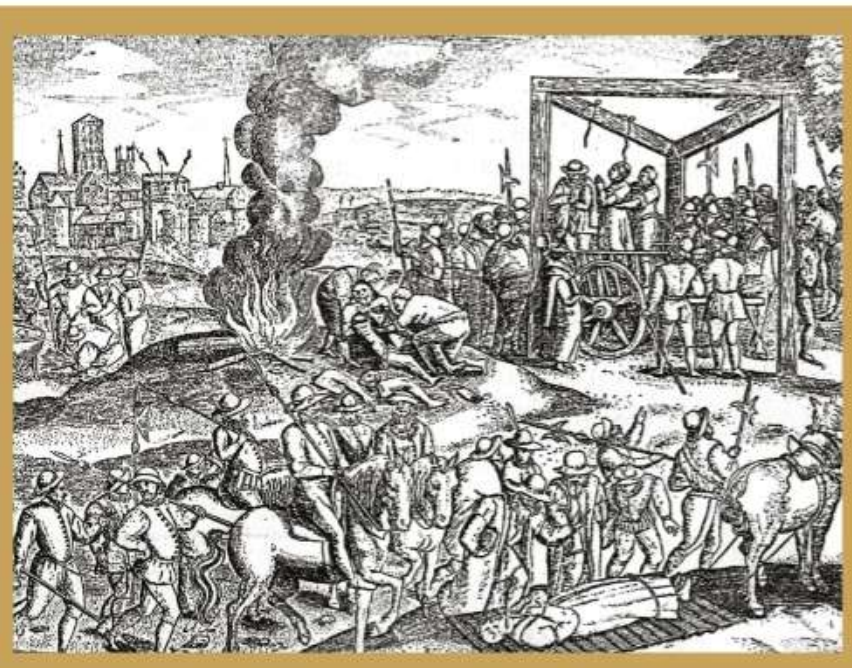
Mary and the Dauphin of France 1518

The first attempt to secure a worthy marriage for Mary took place while she was only two years old. The prospective union was with François, the eldest son of Francis I, and heir to the throne. The Dauphin was only a few months old himself. The proposal fell apart and relations between the kings disintegrated.

Mary and Charles V 1522

With relations with France deteriorating, Henry looked to secure his relationship with the Holy Roman Emperor, who visited England, and his aunt Catherine of Aragon. Charles was therefore Mary's first cousin. The Treaty of Windsor was signed to secure a marriage but this broke down and in 1526 Charles wed Isabella of Portugal.

The queen had failed to appreciate the strength of feeling among her xenophobic people. "The English... are most hostile by their nature to foreigners," remarked the Venetian ambassador. Proof of this came with an uprising in 1554, led by Sir Thomas Wyatt and involving a group of noblemen, including Lady Jane Grey's father. Although there was a strong Protestant undertone to the rebellion, the participants claimed their primary aim was "to prevent us from over-running by strangers."



ABOVE Mary believed eliminating Protestant leaders would see resistant subjects return to Catholicism

LEFT Mary I was crowned as the first queen regnant of England

Wyatt drew a considerable body of supporters to his cause and in January they marched towards London. On 1 February, Mary dispatched the duke of Norfolk to crush the rebels before they reached the capital. But his troops deserted, leaving the queen and her council virtually undefended. This was the first serious test of Mary's queenship and she rose to the challenge. Rallying the loyal troops that had gathered at the Guildhall in the heart of London, she gave an impassioned speech, assuring them that she loved her subjects "as the mother doth the child." For this one, fleeting occasion, Mary seemed entirely at ease as a female sovereign, assuming a maternal role over her subjects. It was a theme that would be taken up often – and to dazzling effect – by her half-sister Elizabeth.

Mary's address was a decisive factor in defeating the rebels, but the episode had destabilised a regime in its infancy and those closest to her urged that she rid herself of any rival claimants. Although she had been innocent of involvement, Lady Jane Grey was executed on 12 February 1554. Elizabeth had been just as careful to avoid any involvement but Mary knew that many of the rebels had hoped to put her on the throne and that was enough to have Elizabeth arrested. She insisted on her innocence, assuring Mary: "I protest before God I never practised, counselled or consented to anything prejudicial to you or dangerous to the state." Undeterred, Mary ordered that her sister be taken to the Tower the next day. Elizabeth remained a prisoner there for more than two months and was almost sent to the block when the lieutenant there received a forged warrant for her execution. Thankfully, he had the presence of mind to verify it with the queen and Elizabeth's life was spared. She was released on 19 May 1554, the anniversary of her mother's execution.

Mary and the Duke of Orleans **1527**

Following discussions that the recently widowed King Francis of France might marry Mary, 11, it was instead decided a betrothal to his eight-year-old second son, Henry, the Duke of Orleans, would be more appropriate. A contract was drawn up and signed but things fell apart when relations between the kings faltered.

Elizabeth and the Duke of Angoulême **1534**

A protracted negotiation between England and France took place with Henry and Anne looking to secure Elizabeth's future with a marriage into the French monarchy. However, King Frances had concerns about Elizabeth legitimacy. Eventually a proposal of Charles, Duke of Angoulême, was made, Francis' third son.

Elizabeth and Thomas Seymour **1547**

Seymour proposed to Elizabeth in a letter months after the death of her father when she was 13 and he was 38. She turned him down, but he married her stepmother and queen dowager Katherine Parr instead. Elizabeth lived with them, and Seymour's unwanted advances continued. He was arrested for treason in 1549.

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Elizabeth was consigned to the palace of Woodstock for almost a year. Her every move was watched and she was not allowed to correspond with anyone unless it was by the council's sanction. Then in April 1555 she was summoned to attend her sister at Hampton Court. Just weeks after marrying Philip of Spain in July 1544, Mary had begun to experience the symptoms of early pregnancy. The sad reality is that these probably resulted from long-standing menstrual problems and a large dose of wishful thinking. As her due date drew close, she moved to Hampton Court in preparation for the birth and wanted Elizabeth there to witness her triumph at the birth of a prince. But as the weeks dragged by it became clear to those who surrounded the queen – if not to Mary herself – that she had been mistaken. Eventually, Mary admitted it had been a false pregnancy. Her sister witnessed her humiliation, rather than her triumph. Elizabeth was keenly aware that Philip found his older wife so distasteful that he took any opportunity to be away from her. It was hardly a positive advertisement for royal marriage and strengthened Elizabeth's resolve to remain a virgin.

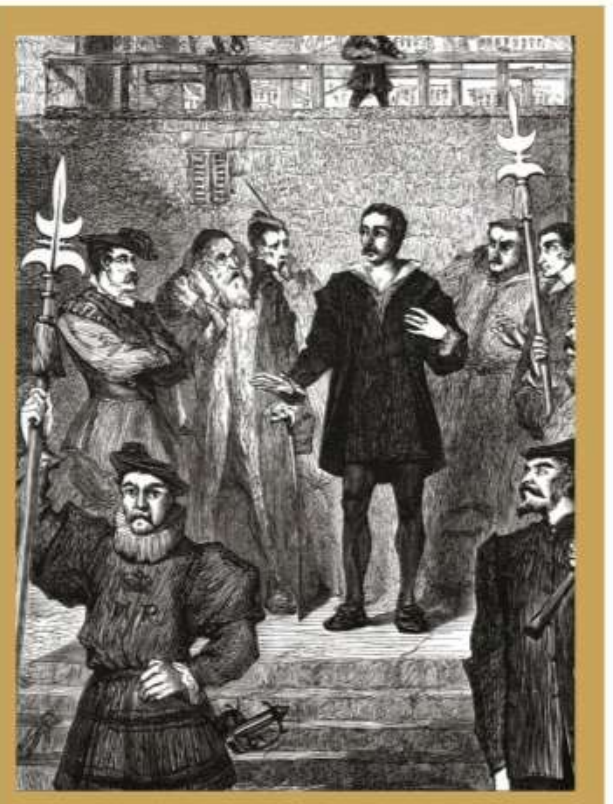
The queen's growing unpopularity was exacerbated by a disastrous event in early 1558. Aware that England lacked the financial resources to support an aggressive foreign policy, Mary and her government had resisted any involvement in continental hostilities. But in 1557 the revival of the Italian Wars, in which the main combatants were France and Spain, forced Mary's hand. Her husband Philip, who had departed England to deal with imperial matters in 1555, returned to plead with the queen for her assistance. Mary acceded to his request and persuaded her government to follow suit. But to avoid the intervention of an English expeditionary force, King Henry II of France arranged a surprise attack on Calais in January 1558. The English garrison was overwhelmed and within a matter of days Thomas Wentworth, deputy of Calais, was obliged to hand over the keys of the town to the French.

The loss of Calais was a devastating blow. It was the last English outpost in France, a reminder of former military glories, and for almost 200 years it had given English monarchs the right to style themselves ruler of France. Legend has it that Mary was so distraught when she heard the news that she declared the name 'Calais' would be found engraved on her heart. She was soon comforted, though, by a growing conviction that she

BURIED TOGETHER

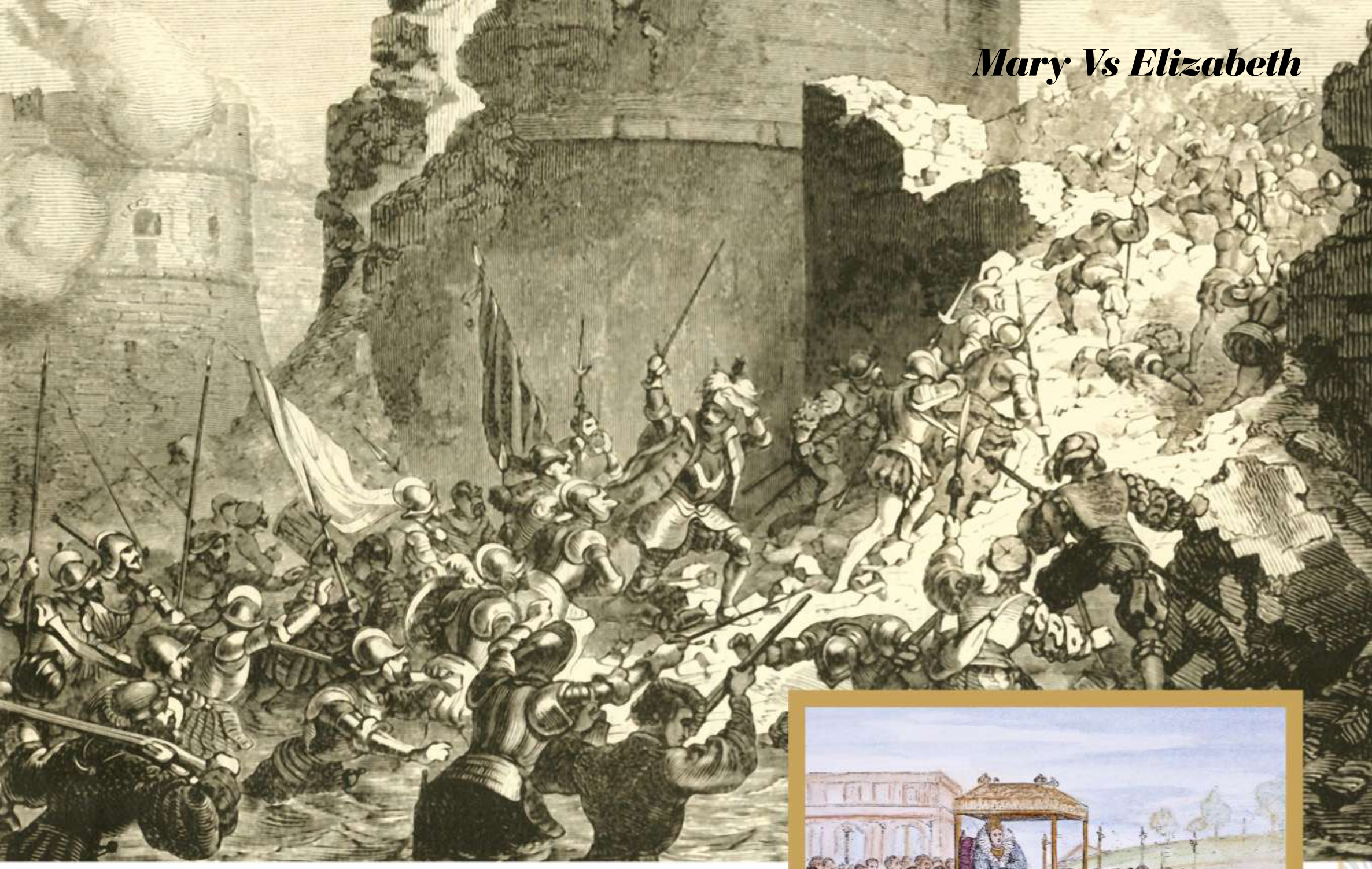
The sisters now lie together at Westminster Abbey

In life the sisters were frequently allied and torn apart by their changing fortunes, but in death they were finally brought together. Mary I was laid to rest at Westminster Abbey in 1558 in the north aisle of Henry VII's Lady Chapel. She was buried in the vault, under the monument to her grandfather. When Elizabeth died in 1603, her successor James I (who didn't attend the funeral ceremony) had a white marble monument to her built in the chapel as well. Her coffin was then placed on top of Mary's in 1606. The base of the monument above carries the inscription: "Partners both in throne and grave, here rest we two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary, in the hope of the Resurrection."



ABOVE Sir Thomas Wyatt plotted against Mary I and had supported Lady Jane Grey previously

LEFT Suspecting she was involved in a Protestant conspiracy to topple her, Mary had Elizabeth imprisoned in the Tower of London



"Mary deserves credit as the first woman to successfully claim the throne of England"

was pregnant. Overlooking her previous experience she wrote to her husband, telling him their child would be born the following March.

Few people shared Mary's confidence. "She the more distresses herself, perceiving daily that no one believes in the possibility of her having progeny, so that day by day she sees her authority and the respect induced by it diminish," said one observer at court. Undeterred, in February 1558 Mary entered her confinement. As the weeks dragged on with no sign of any labour pains, she became increasingly despondent. It is possible that the swelling in her stomach was due not to pregnancy but to cancer. Even during her first confinement it had been rumoured that "she was deceived by a Tympanie [tumour] or some other like disease, to think herself with child".

By April 1558 the queen had given up hope of a child and re-emerged into public life. The fact that she invited her half-sister to Richmond that month and entertained her with great ceremony was taken by many as an indication she would name Elizabeth her heir. "Madam Elizabeth already sees herself as the next Queen," her husband's envoy, the Count of Feria, noted. Still Mary prevaricated. Although Elizabeth had been discreet in her observance of the Protestant faith and had attended mass in the chapels royal, she'd made it clear she would not continue Mary's campaign to bring England back to Roman Catholicism.

With her health now rapidly deteriorating, Mary could not avoid the issue any longer. On 8 November she sent word to Elizabeth confirming her as heir. Nine days later Mary died. She was 42. Her husband, who had refused to return to his dying wife's side, expressed "reasonable regret" when told of her passing but almost immediately began making overtures for Elizabeth's hand in marriage.

Mary tends to be unfavourably compared with her half-sister, but she deserves credit as the first woman to successfully claim the throne of England, overcoming competing claims and fierce opposition. Carving out a position as queen regnant had been a considerable challenge. By the end of her reign a number of precedents had been set, most notably the 1554 Act confirming that a "sole queen should rule as absolutely as a king." In the address given at Mary's funeral, John White, bishop of Winchester declared she had been "a queen and by the same title a king also" and that thanks to her, Elizabeth was now "both king and queen... of the realm".

As well as benefitting from the groundwork Mary had laid for her as a queen regnant, Elizabeth had learned from her sister's mistakes. First and foremost, she had been given a stark lesson in the disasters that could ensue from taking a husband, particularly one from overseas. She had also witnessed the dangers of pursuing a dogmatic and uncompromising policy, no matter how close to her heart it might be. Above all, she had seen the damage that could be done by disregarding popular opinion. Mary had lacked what we might call 'PR skills'. By contrast, her sister would become a brilliant propagandist. She started as she meant to go on: days after inheriting the throne, Elizabeth ordered the following inscription to be added to Mary's tomb: "Marie now dead, Elizabeth lives, our just and lawful Queen in whom her sister's virtues rare, abundantly are seen."

TOP The loss of Calais in 1558 to the French was considered a major humiliation

ABOVE The coronation of Elizabeth I after the death of her sister marked another change of direction for England

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WHY DID STALINGRAD MATTER?

On the eve of the battle's anniversary, historian Iain MacGregor discusses one of the most important engagements of World War II and why it matters today

Interview by Callum McKelvie

This 23 August marks 80 years since the start of the Battle of Stalingrad, one of the bloodiest engagements of World War II. The battle would see one of the most disastrous defeats for the German Army, bringing its long period of dominance to a shattering end. Following its mauling at Stalingrad the German war machine was forced to retreat, and the Soviet Union partnered with Britain and America to end the Nazi terror once and for all. On the eve of the anniversary, we spoke to historian Iain MacGregor about the importance of the battle and how it changed the direction of the war.

What was the situation leading up to the Battle of Stalingrad, particularly on the Eastern Front?

By the spring of 1942, the German Army was rebuilding itself. On 22 June 1941 the war on the Eastern Front with Russia had begun when Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa. His plan to knock them out in the first year of the war had failed and by the second year of the war, strategically, world events had moved on. Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and brought America in on the side of the Allies: Hitler now faced a global conflict and he was still trying to win the war on the Eastern Front. But he knew that it might not be possible in a single offensive, in a single summer. So his plan was to take the armies that he had and achieve one of the key goals that the Nazis had tried to achieve the year before: drive into the south, into the Caucasus. Here he intended to capture the oil, because he knew if he could capture the oil and Germany had a supply of it, then their war machine could continue for a great many years. Therefore he would be in a strong position to take on the Russians and the Western Allies. That's where Stalingrad now came into the picture; by the summer of 1942 it was part of the strategic plan for this new offensive that was going ahead in southern Russia. ▶

ABOVE Russian troops defend their position during the Battle of Stalingrad

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EXPERT BIO

© Adrian Pope

IAIN MACGREGOR

Iain MacGregor is the author of *Checkpoint Charlie: The Cold War, the Berlin Wall and the Most Dangerous Place on Earth*. His new book, *The Lighthouse Of Stalingrad*, is out now from Constable, priced £25.

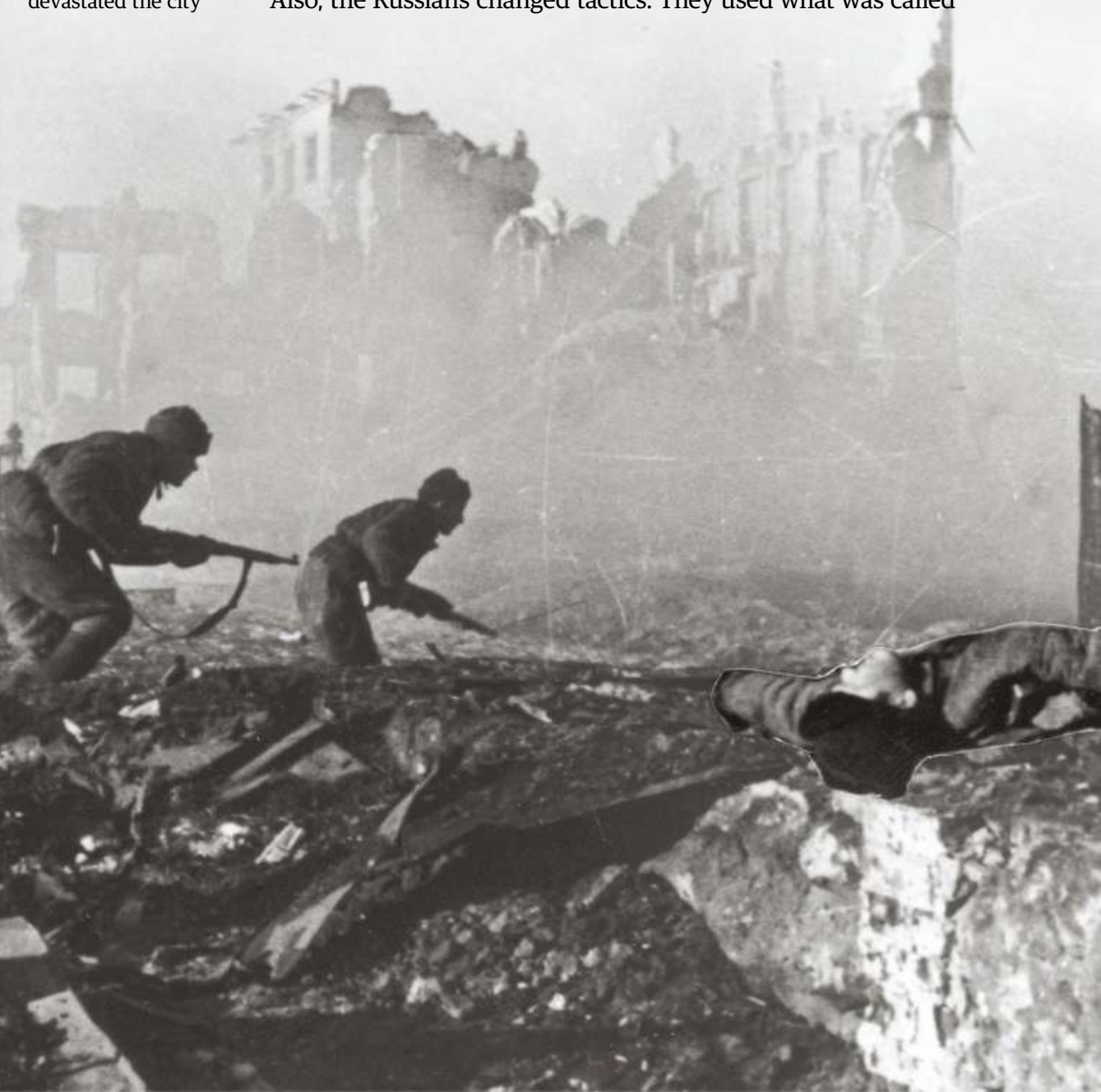
What was the strategic importance of Stalingrad?
Operation Blue, which commenced on 28 June 1942, had four phases. Phase one was going to start the offensive and the drive through towards the transport hub for Voronezh. Phase two would be heading south to capture further strategic points along the line, like Millerovo and Rostov. Phase three, which is where Stalingrad comes in, was for one army group to drive east, capture or besiege Stalingrad and stop vital river traffic going from north to south and south to north from the Caspian Sea all the way up past Moscow – a vital supply line for the Russians. It was integral for oil supplies to come from the south to the north and also for supplies of weaponry and foodstuffs and minerals and oil. If they could get their armies to Stalingrad, the Germans knew that their eastern flank would be protected. Any kind of counter-attack by the Russians to stop this new assault would have been protected, and the plan was to then go down into the Caucasus.

The Battle of Stalingrad has a reputation as one of the most brutal of the Eastern Front. How true is this?
This was a new kind of fighting. Lots of other cities had been attacked and captured by the Germans, whether it was Rotterdam in the west in the first few months of the war, or whether it was Smolensk, Kharkov and Mariupol the previous year. These had been huge cities, but the Germans had successfully captured them very quickly. But Stalingrad was a whole different ball game because of the geographical location of the city itself. It was over 80km long, like a ribbon hugging the Volga, and it was about 8km deep in some places, densely populated with lots of housing. Before they assaulted the city, they carpet-bombed it as they had with many other cities. Previously this had worked and had brought about success quickly. However, Stalingrad was a huge city, with a pre-war population in the 400,000s, and by the time the Germans arrived refugees had swollen this number to double that size. The Luftwaffe bombed the city incessantly from 23 August onwards until the German Army was actually at the gates of Stalingrad ready to attack it. The bombing created almost a lunar landscape of destroyed apartment blocks, government buildings and factories. It was perfect camouflage for any kind of defensive force that wanted to hide in the rubble and ambush whoever was going to attack. This resulted in a different style of fighting. It wasn't blitzkrieg, it wasn't a swift advance of German armour behind a massive aerial bombardment. In Stalingrad, it was armoured vehicles trying to navigate through the ruins of a destroyed city and being ambushed left, right and centre by near suicidal attacks by the tenacious Red Army. You also had the freezing Russian winter coming in. Firstly, freezing rain turns to snow, there's freezing wind coming off the Volga, and the temperature plunges to about -20°C. You're just trying to survive the conditions before you even start to try and survive the battle. Also, the Russians changed tactics. They used what was called

ABOVE-LEFT Many thousands of civilians died during the battle for the key Soviet city

LEFT The Battle of Stalingrad is known as one of the most brutal of the Second World War

BELOW The aerial bombardment of Stalingrad devastated the city



THE LIGHTHOUSE OF STALINGRAD

The focus of his new book, Iain MacGregor explains the importance of one building in particular, codenamed The Lighthouse

In his new book, *The Lighthouse Of Stalingrad*, Iain MacGregor tells the story of this ferocious battle through a single building. "The lighthouse was a code name for a government building that had specialists such as engineers, architects and technicians that worked in the factory district to the north of Stalingrad," he explains. "It was a large house, with probably 100 rooms there for families and professional workers. And it just so happened that during the part of the battle where both sides were fighting for the heart of the city, that was exactly where it was – right in the city centre."

The building has since become known also as Pavlov's House, after Soviet Sergeant Yakov Pavlov who held the building during the battle and also first seized it back from the German forces. "By late September the Germans had captured vast chunks of the city," MacGregor tells us. "The Russians had thrown in whatever reinforcements they had to push them back and they were still clinging to these bridgeheads on the western side of the Volga. The Lighthouse had been occupied by the Germans and then had been recaptured by a Red Army storm group."

But why was the Lighthouse so fiercely fought over? Strategically, what made it so important? "It was a perfect vantage point because it was mostly intact and from the roof it gave you an absolutely amazing 360-degree view of the city," says MacGregor. "You could see the enemy troop movements and what they were planning for further attacks. But you could also give signals back to the Russian artillery and HQ on the other side of the river. It was codenamed The Lighthouse because it was this kind of beacon that they hoped would offer them some protection in terms of knowing what the enemy was up to."

ABOVE The monument built at the rear end of Pavlov's House

storm groups, where it was very intimate combat measured in metres. They were fighting room to room, floor to floor, house to house. It became a meat grinder.

What were some of the key moments of the battle?

The first key moment was the intense aerial bombardment. But then, as the fighting moved onto the ground, the first big assault by the Germans began on 13 September – that captured a big part of the western side of the city. The Russian commander of the 62nd Army, who were defending the city, famously said they were going to "hug" the enemy because they knew the Germans had aerial superiority and the Russians were thinking: "If we can get as close as we can to the Germans it will put the Luftwaffe off trying to attack us because they might attack their own men." And that's exactly what happened. On 14 October General Friedrich Paulus, who was commanding the German 6th Army, attacked once more and tried to sweep the whole centre of the city. They captured the bulk of the centre and by the end of that second phase the Russians were holding on to slivers of land on the western side, including the north where the factory district was. On 11 November, Paulus sent in a reinforced heavy assault to capture the factory district, and that was pretty much successful.

How were the Soviet forces finally able to win?

Essentially, while this fighting was going on in Stalingrad and 100km to the north and south as well, the different German

"IF THEY COULD GET THEIR ARMIES TO STALINGRAD, THE GERMANS KNEW THAT THEIR EASTERN FLANK WOULD BE PROTECTED"

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ABOVE German infantry forces suffered huge losses during the battle

ABOVE-RIGHT A cartoon by DR Fitzpatrick marking the successful defence of Stalingrad

RIGHT Field Marshal Paulus surrendered on 31 January 1943, ending the Battle of Stalingrad

Army groups were strung out. Not only did this mean it was difficult to keep the two different armies supplied but, equally, now separated by so much land they were unable to support one another if the other one was attacked en masse. And that's exactly what happened. On 19 November, the Russians launched a classic encirclement movement and caught the Germans in Stalingrad completely by surprise. The Russians thought that if they were lucky they might have about 75,000-100,000 enemy troops trapped in the city – they had no idea that it was roughly around 330,000 troops. Then they reinforced the encirclement and pushed west to try and block off Army Group A as it was down in the Caucasus. However, the Germans put together a rescue plan and Field Marshal Erich von Manstein managed to force his way up from the Caucasus to stabilise the line. He stabilised the line to a point but he still needed to get to Stalingrad where the 6th Army was encircled. Hitler had been persuaded that they could resupply the trapped 6th Army. He didn't want to lose Stalingrad, as he famously told his chief of staff: "If we leave this place now we will never get back again." He knew that because of the cost in terms of his men's lives, tanks, fuel and aeroplanes they would probably never be able to put on this kind of offensive again. It was worked out immediately that at least 500 tonnes of supplies a day were needed but at best they managed 300 to 350 tonnes, and on certain days nothing at all. It became a war of attrition. On 31 January, Field Marshal Paulus, promoted a day or so before, surrendered and this army of 330,000 (which had been reduced by then to about 91,000) was marched off into captivity.

"STALINGRAD WAS THE BIGGEST, BLOODIEST BATTLE OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR. STRATEGICALLY, WHAT IT DID TO THE GERMAN ARMY WAS OF HUGE SIGNIFICANCE"

How much can the German offensive against Stalingrad be considered to be a turning point in the war?

It failed, pretty much on all levels. They had to retreat from the Caucasus and didn't get the oil. They had to retreat west back from the Volga and back from the Dnieper as well – two vital rivers of supply. That was a major turning point, which would be followed the following year by Hitler basically only having enough forces to try and stabilise the line rather than launch another major offensive. Psychologically, for the Red Army it was the turning point in terms of the constant defeats they'd had since the beginning of Operation Barbarossa. Previously the Germans had been inflicting far more damage on the Red Army than the Red Army was inflicting upon them. But Stalingrad proved to the ordinary Russian soldier and the civilians reading about it in newspapers or listening on the radio that the German troops weren't superhuman. They could be defeated. This spread through the rest of the Western Allies too because this battle for Stalingrad was world news. Even the BBC had its reporter on the ground, Paul Winterton, and he made a very famous radio report.

How did their victory become a subject for propaganda for the Soviet Union?

The Red Army and the Soviet government were very clever and very astute. They needed to keep the public on side because of the heavy defeats they'd had the year before – they lost over 3 million men and by the end of the war they'd lose 6 million. Not to mention all the territory they lost, including pretty

NO RETREAT • NO MERCY

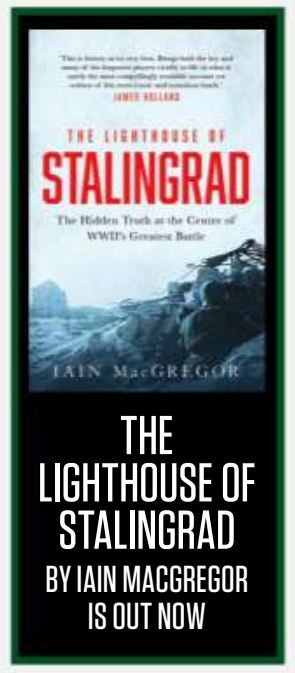
The Stalin order that saw the Red Army shoot its own men

On 28 July 1942, barely a month away from the beginning of the Battle of Stalingrad, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin issued order no.227. This order dictated that any "cowards or panic makers" would be shot should they abandon their position, try to flee or retreat. "It is time to stop the retreat," the order dictated. "Not a single step back! This should be our slogan from now." The order stated that "blocking detachments" – groups of armed officers and government officials placed at the rear of a unit – should be used to shoot any would-be deserters. In Stalingrad as many as 13,500 deserters are said to have been shot. However, the idea of blocking detachments seemed counter-intuitive to a conflict that required as many men as possible. Deserters had always been executed and, while the message was clear, in the second month of the battle the practice of blocking detachments was quietly discontinued.

much all of Ukraine. Once it was realised that potentially the summer offensive would be settled in Stalingrad itself, a place that had always been Stalin's city, it became a useful tool. They made sure that enough propaganda units, journalists and war correspondents were covering the battle. Stalingrad was almost used as a metaphor for the lifeblood of Russia itself. It was heavily recorded, with reporters such as the famous Vasily Grossman who would be right on the front line and interviewing the soldiers as they were fighting. Obviously a huge artistic licence was taken in making sure that the right government line was given, even when things weren't going their way. You have to remember that right up until the Russian counter-attack on 19 November the Germans had captured nearly 90 percent of the city and Hitler, a week before the Russian counter-attack, even announced they had. The Russians wanted to make sure that the reporters were giving some kind of morale boost to the country to say: 'Well, no, we haven't lost the city. Look at the way our fighters are heroically defending it to the last drop of blood.' Once the counter-attack was successful, the Germans surrendered the propaganda. The propaganda was then amplified a million times over to say: 'Well, look, we've defeated this superhuman army, this army that swept all before it over the last two years, that conquered France, conquered the Balkans, and almost conquered Britain. We've destroyed them at Stalingrad.' That's the propaganda effort.

What can be considered the legacy of Stalingrad?

Stalingrad is the biggest, bloodiest battle of the Second World War. Strategically, what it did to the German Army was of huge significance. By the end of the war, due to the reporting that had been going on during the battle, it was one of the key moments and key cities that was really celebrated by the 'free' world. As I say in my book, by the time of the peace, French governments across France wanted to celebrate this great victory. You go across France and there's all these streets and boulevards that have the name Stalingrad in them; one of the main stations on the Paris Metro is called Stalingrad. That was repeated across Eastern Europe as well in all the countries that were part of the Warsaw Pact; they all had squares, parks and apartment blocks with Stalingrad in the name. In the UK, up until the recent war with Ukraine, Stalingrad was twinned with Coventry, one of the very first 'twin cities', created in 1943. Winston Churchill presented the Sword of Stalingrad to Stalin at the Tehran Conference in November 1943. But there are also connotations because of what's going on right now. In Ukraine there are echoes of Stalingrad. This time you've got the Russian Army, which has more armour, weapons and planes, attacking cities. Whether it is Mariupol or Kharkov, it is the same kind of thing: these destroyed cities where units are contesting the city building by building and floor by floor. The links back to the Second World War are very clear.



BELOW At the Tehran Conference in November 1943 Winston Churchill presented Joseph Stalin with the Sword of Stalingrad

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REVENGE OF THE 47 RONIN

In 1703, after a century of peace, a band of samurai shocked Japan with a suicidal mission to avenge their disgraced lord

Written by Hareth Al Bustani

In January 1703, Japan was just days away from celebrating a century of Tokugawa rule when an incident broke out that threatened to throw the entire system into doubt. After years of waiting in the shadows, a group of samurai emerged from hiding to strike down the man responsible for their lord's death. The act put the Tokugawa in an impossibly awkward situation, casting an ugly light on the hypocrisy of the warrior code underpinning their authority.

Two years earlier, in 1701, Japan had been enjoying a period of hitherto unknown peace and prosperity after years of bloodshed and chaos. After completing the unification of Japan, the Tokugawa had brought an end to perpetual warfare, ushering in a new era of obsessive control. Although the country remained under the rule of a military dictator – the shōgun – and the samurai still reigned supreme over the merchant, artisan and peasant classes, peace had turned warriors into aristocrats.

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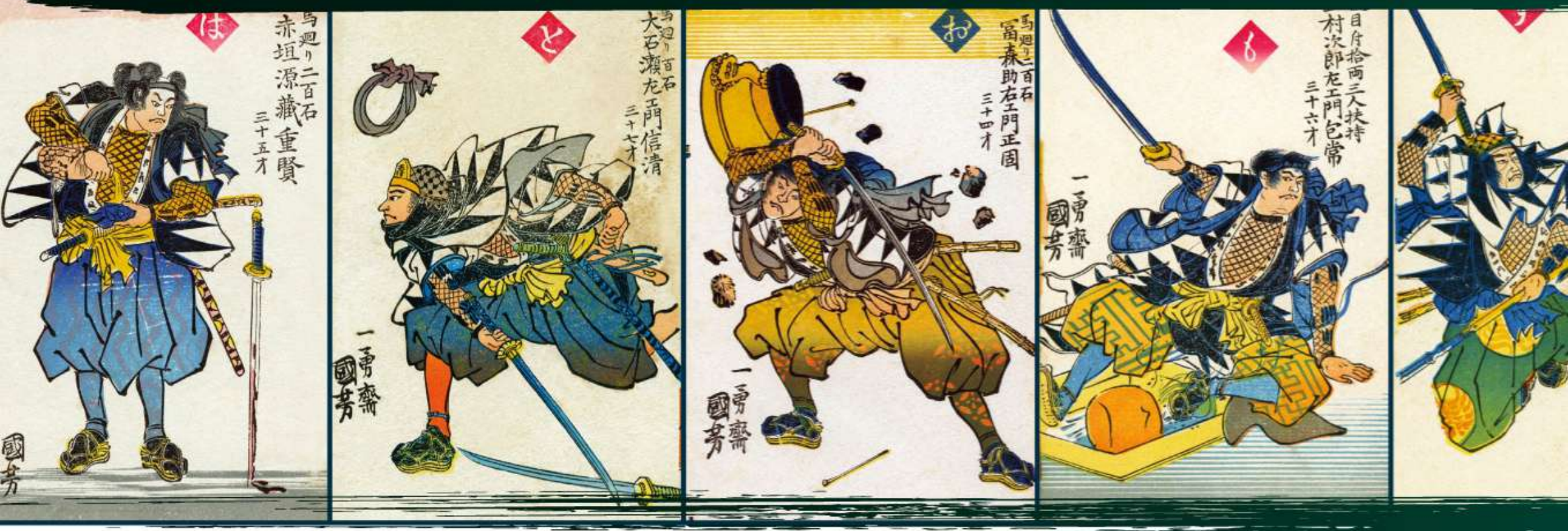

Stephen Turnbull, an expert on Japanese history, describes how a "cosmopolitan culture" flourished in the capital Edo (Tokyo) as the economy flourished. Reflecting on the times, Turnbull explains: "While on duty there, a samurai's display of redundant military might concealed the state of genteel poverty into which many of them had sunk, along with their once-exclusive martial traditions. Commoners now wore swords in open defiance of the law, while theatres put on plays whose plots mocked the once noble tradition of the samurai."

In his book *A Brief History of the Samurai*, historian Jonathan Clements sets the scene: "As part of the endless rounds of ceremonial and courtesy calls of the Tokugawa period, Asano Naganori, the young feudal lord of the Akō domain was ordered to entertain envoys in Edo who had freshly arrived from Kyōto – still the official capital. As part of the preparations, he was instructed by Kira Yoshinaka – historically known as Yoshihasa – one of the Shōgun's high-ranking officials. The men do not appear to have hit it off, and, reading between the lines, Kira was expecting substantial bribes and honoraria from Asano, even though it was his job to instruct him."

Asano and Kira were samurai of very different breeds. Having inherited his domain at the age of eight, according to Turnbull early reports described the 34-year-old Asano "as being intelligent and strict but much given to pleasure in preference to the sober business of government". He was also said to have displayed neither literary nor military skills, and had "a considerable sexual appetite," supposedly promoting retainers based on their success in procuring women for him.

Kira, on the other hand, was a member of an exclusive group of 'high families' responsible for overseeing the Tokugawa's ceremonial matters. By 1701, the 60-year-old had served successive shōguns as an "utterly reliable master of court ceremonial" for four decades. Turnbull adds: "A man in that position, one can safely assume, did not suffer fools gladly. When faced, therefore, with having to instruct in etiquette a young daimyo to whom court ceremonial was much less interesting than court ladies, and a man who appeared ignorant of the most basic learning and yet enjoyed an income 11-times greater than his stuffy old teacher, Yoshihisa's self-control was to be tested to the limit."

Clements says that Kira had "mastered the art of the snide comment" and may have made "one allusion too many about Asano's country origins." On 21 April 1701, during a confrontation in Edo Castle's Corridor of Pines, Clements says "Kira pushed too far," provoking an enraged Asano into drawing his wakizashi short sword – the only type of sword allowed in the palace – and slashing his face. Alluding to their hostilities, Asano roared: "Have you forgotten my recent grievance?"

ŌISHI SPENT THE NEXT TWO YEARS LIVING LIKE A TYPICAL OUTCAST SAMURAI; DRINKING COMPULSIVELY

BELOW During his two years of planning, Ōishi fooled Kira's spies by frequenting bars and brothels, and even supposedly feasting on fish on the eve of the anniversary of his master's death

BELOW-RIGHT After enduring one insult too many from the haughty master of court ceremonial, Kira Yoshihasa, Asano made the fatal mistake of drawing his weapon in the shōgun's palace

Although the wound was minor and the men were promptly separated by guards, drawing a weapon within the shōgun's palace was a capital offence no matter what the cause. Asano had made a fatal mistake, one that was resolved with great haste: the attack took place at around midday, Asano was arrested at 1pm and at 4pm he was ordered to kill himself by ritualistic belly-cutting, known as seppuku. At 6pm, Asano extinguished his own life. Sharing the fate that befell all vanquished or shamed households, his lands were stripped away and his followers made outcasts, becoming wandering masterless samurai, known as 'rōnin', or 'men of the waves'.

One of the unintended consequences of the lasting peace ushered in by the Tokugawa was a surplus of these masterless samurai. Whether their lords had been defeated in war or simply impoverished, numbers of unemployed samurai swelled across the nation. While many hung up their swords to become monks

or merchants, others roamed the countryside as roving bandits, (as described by Kenneth Henshall in his *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*).

In previous times, one might expect samurai to follow their masters into death – a practice known as junshi. When the Hōjō clan were overthrown in 1333, 6,000 followers were said to have killed themselves. Seeing it as a precious drain of resources, the Tokugawa banned the act in 1663 and enforced it so strictly that when a vassal of Okudaira Tadamasa killed himself upon his master's death, two of his children were executed and several relatives banished.

However, for a samurai whose lord had been wronged there was another honourable route available: katakiuchi – the vendetta. George Sansom, author of *A History of Japan, 1615-1867*, explains: "The first case of katakiuchi in the Edo period was the Igagoe encounter of 1634, between one Watanabe Kazuma and Kawai Matagorō, who had murdered Kazuma's father. Kazuma, accompanied by a brother-in-law and two young samurai, pursued Matagorō and more than a score of his kinsmen into a lonely upland in the province of Iga. Kazuma's small party overcame their enemies and Matagorō was killed."

As soon as Asano's castellan Ōishi Yoshio heard of his master's death he shut down the castle as ordered, disbanded the soldiers ▶

RISE OF THE CHUSHINGURA

Suppressed at first, the story of the 47 rōnin has become one of Japan's most iconic tales

The revenge of the 47 rōnin was adapted into a gripping drama known as *Chūshingura, The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*. However, at first the Tokugawa desperately fought to suppress it, "slapping down" every play and print depicting the event, says Jonathan Clements, author of *Japan at War in the Pacific: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese Empire in Asia: 1868-1945*. He adds: "They really wished it would go away, but they were stuck with the fact that this event had really happened, and that it risked inspiring everyone to behave in the same way. The best analogy I can think of is American gun laws.

"You have this antique custom, a 'right to bear arms', sitting there in the blueprint for society, and everyone pretends it doesn't make that big a difference, but it literally weaponises thousands of tensions, conflicts and vendettas throughout the country. Japan has had a century of peace, but its entire ruling echelon is a society of actual warriors, whose job it is, technically, to kill people, and the 47 rōnin are a sudden, jarring reminder of what it is samurai actually do."

The play was not performed on stage until it was adapted into a bunraku puppet show almost 50 years later. "And even then, the authors pretend that it's describing events from hundreds of years in the past in an attempt to get around the censor," says Clements. Later adapted into a kabuki play, *Chūshingura* has since become one of Japan's most beloved stories, depicted in literature, television, anime and even a 2013 adaptation starring Keanu Reeves.

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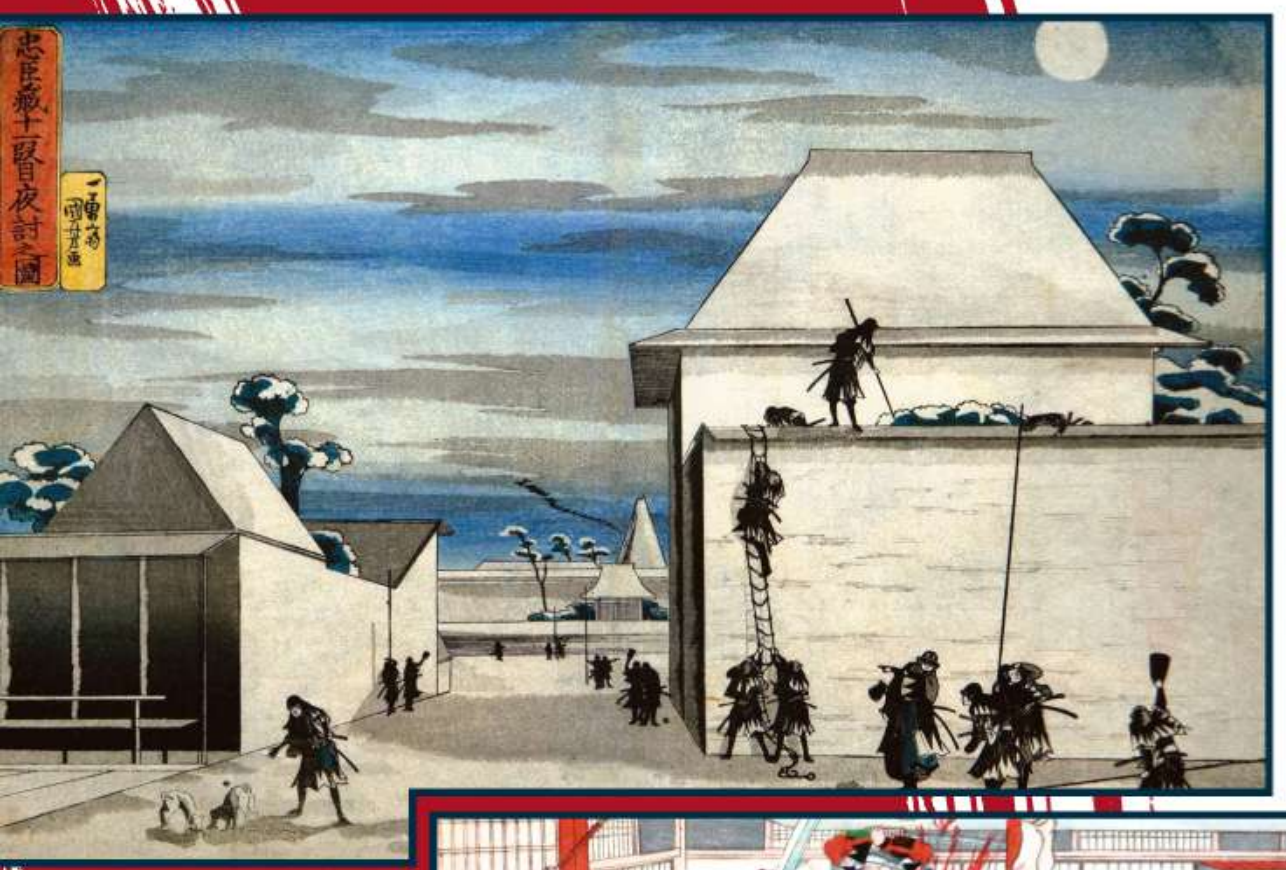
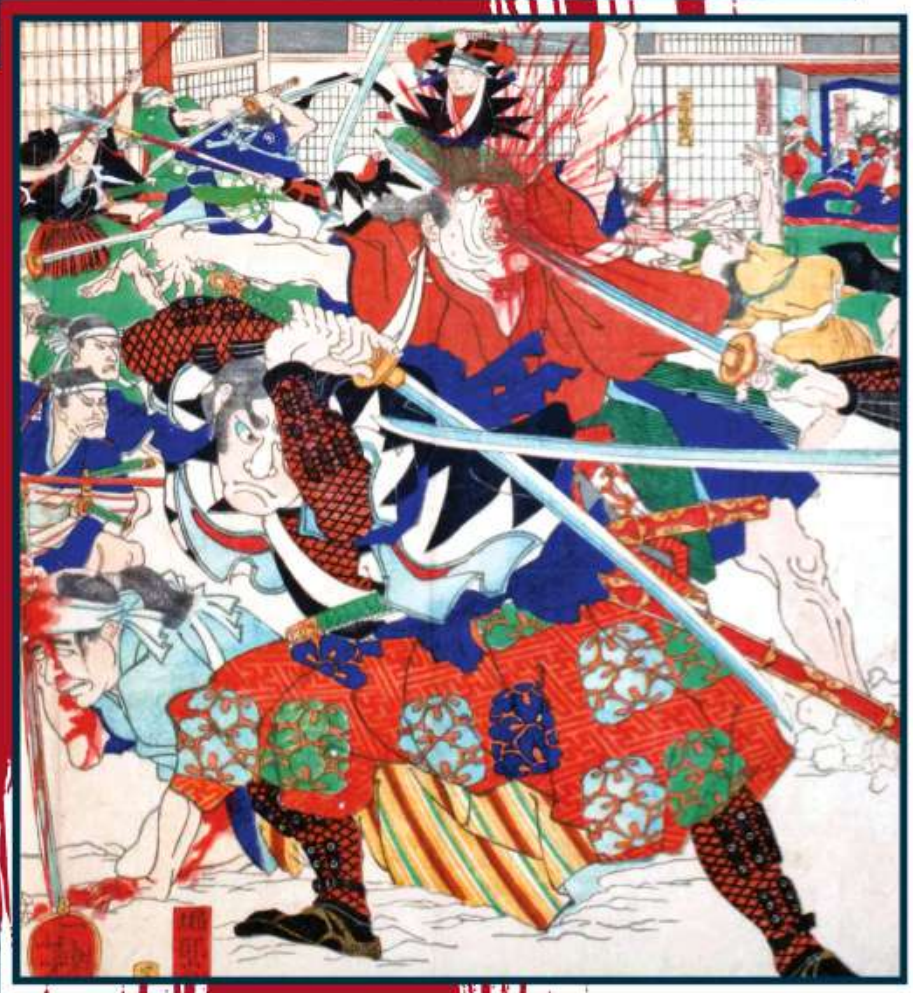




ABOVE The 47 ronin launched their assault under a cloak of night and snow, scaling the walls of Kira's mansion, while trying to minimise civilian casualties

RIGHT Art by Tsukioka Yoshitoshi from 1864 depicting the night attack of the 47 ronin

BELOW When Kira refused to die with honour by killing themselves, Ōishi cut off his head, using the same sword his master had killed himself with

and handed the keys to the new lord appointed by the shōgunate. Clements reflects: "Where once there might have been war, the Tokugawa rule was supreme and a lord could be unseated by simple decree." However, tellingly, neither Ōishi nor his comrades chose to kill themselves. They had something else in mind...

Although Ōishi had fulfilled his duty to the shōgun, he had a greater duty to fulfil: avenge the abuse of his lord Asano. Choosing suicide before clearing his master's name was unthinkable. So, together with dozens of retainers, he descended into the shadows of the underworld and began slowly plotting his revenge. Keen to maintain the element of surprise and disarm his enemies of any suspicions, he turned to 'method acting'. Over the next two years Ōishi played the role of a typical outcast samurai, drinking at Kyōto's seediest bars and brothels. Outwardly it seemed he had simply given up on it all. He even divorced his wife and disowned his children – though, in reality, this was to insulate them from the consequences of his future actions.

Clements describes how the plan came together: "Slowly, the 47 rōnin converged on Edo. One married the daughter of the man who had built Kira's house, obtaining in the process the plans for the inside of the mansion. Others secretly smuggled weapons into Edo." After two years of waiting, during the winter of 1702/03, under a cloak of night and snowfall, the assassins launched a night raid on Kira's castle. Turnbull says one dramatic recalling has Ōishi proclaim: "Our hatred of our lord's sworn enemy is piled up like this white snow. This evening we attack to avenge our lord. We will need enough force to move a mountain. The pure snow will both wipe away our disgrace and muffle our voices."

Attacking both the front and rear gates simultaneously, the samurai scaled the walls with ladders, before asking the surrounding mansions not to intervene in what was a vendetta directed against one individual. Leaving behind archers to strike down anyone attempting to raise the alarm, the attackers pressed forward and ingeniously hammered iron clamps into the door frames of the long barracks housing the vast majority of Kira's sleeping ashigaru soldiers – trapping them within. That left just the elite samurai in the mansion itself to deal with.

Clements adds: "Pointedly, several of Ōishi's men were assigned to secure the porters, neighbours and servants, not with violence but with the simple announcement that the samurai were on noble business and that no non-combatants need be hurt."

As Ōishi beat on his war drums, he and his men rushed into the mansion, breaking out in chaotic fighting with Kira's valiant defenders. In the ensuing chaos, 17 of Kira's men were killed and 22 wounded – remarkably, none of the 47 rōnin were seriously hurt. As his men died all around in heroic fights to the death, Kira himself fled through a hidden door, with Ōishi in hot pursuit. Having finally caught up to his foe, Ōishi held up a lantern to his face, revealing the distinctive scar left by his master's blade.

As Kira dropped to his knees and bowed, Ōishi offered him the chance to atone by performing seppuku. When he refused, Ōishi promptly grabbed a handful of his hair, dragged him up and lopped off his head, supposedly with the same blade his lord had used to kill himself.

As they left, the rōnin extinguished the lamps in the house to avoid sparking off a fire and then carried Kira's head to their master's grave. By the time they arrived at the Zen temple grounds of Sengakuji, word had already spread and they received a heroes' welcome from the local townsfolk. Later, they handed themselves into the authorities, sending just one survivor to Asano's former domain to spread word.

The events placed the Tokugawa authorities in an uncomfortable situation. "The samurai had behaved impeccably according to samurai tradition, but had also defied a shōgunal

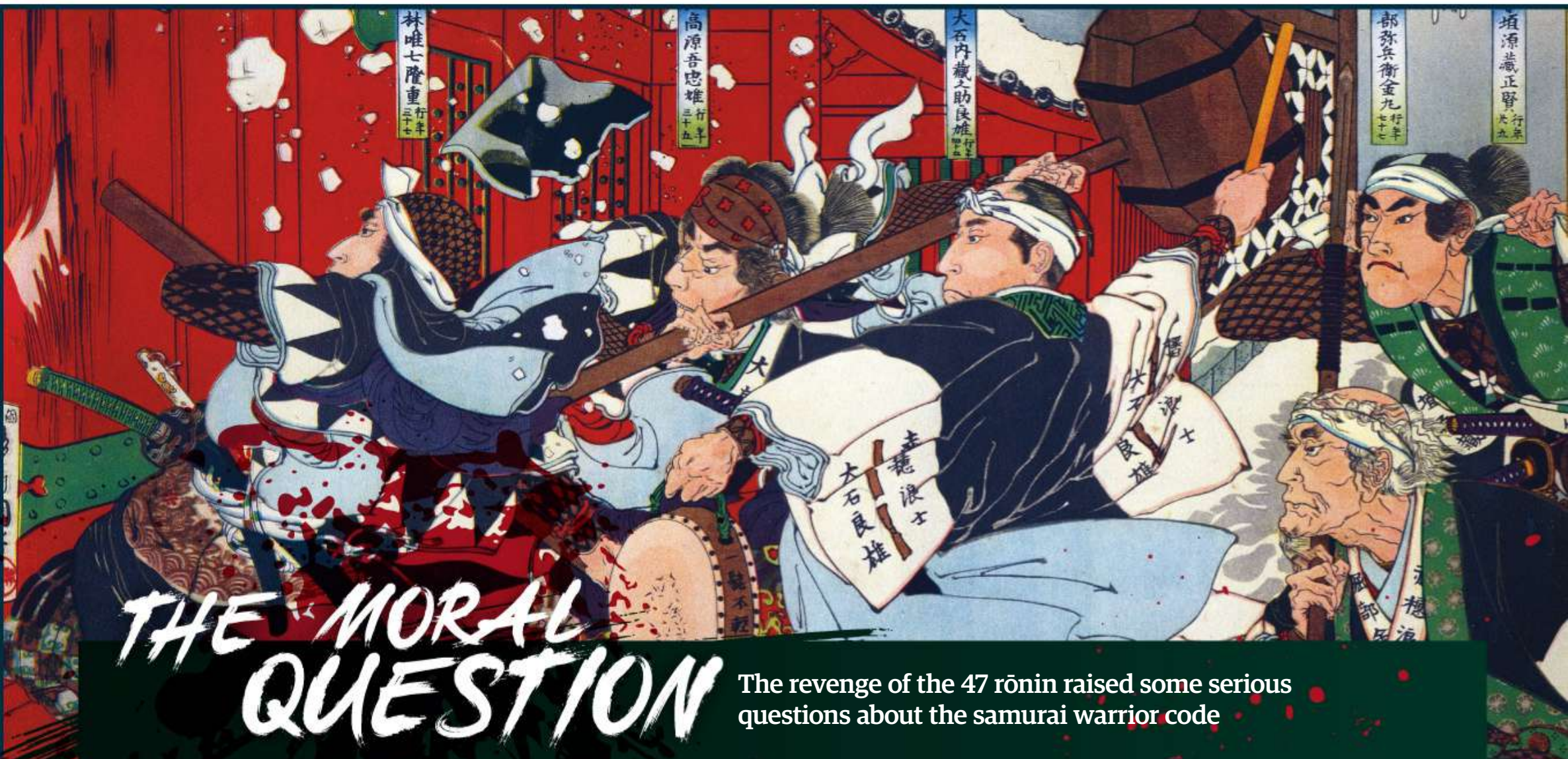
WHEN KIRA REFUSED TO KILL HIMSELF, ŌISHI DRAGGED HIM UP BY HIS HAIR AND LOPPED OFF HIS HEAD

prohibition," writes Clements, adding: "Edo locals did not help by petitioning the shōgun on behalf of Ōishi and his men, pointing out how true they were to the nebulously defined samurai code of honour. Eventually, the shōgun ordered that instead of the death penalty as common murderers, the rōnin would be offered the chance to perform seppuku as a gesture of respect."

As expected, asides from the lone messenger – who was spared – the warriors carried out the verdict with haste and honour. In the process they cleared their lord's name, leading to the restoration of his house, with a reduced fief.

Clements says the story has grown with each telling: "Writers on the 47 rōnin tend to focus on the tactics and facts of the vendetta itself, and not on the awful, inescapable system that pushed these men into acting the way that they did. Ōishi acted the way he did and Kira acted the way he did [partly because of] this huge long chain of obligations and rules and graft that shunts entire armies of men around Japan on a regular basis to stand guard at the shōgun's palace, to keep them busy and in thrall to the guy who runs the country. But [the shōgun] only does so because he has this kind of emergency generalship that he shouldn't really have after 100 years without a war to fight.

"But that, too, is why it had such a resonance in Edo Japan, because the 47 rōnin were a reminder of the foundations of Tokugawa society. They become a symbol of the sort of pressures that everybody is under, men on the edge who see themselves left with no other option. And there's this question hanging there for the next 150 years: what if the Tokugawa are the bad guys? What if this is all their fault? What if the whole system is a sham and we really should be worrying more about, you know, modernisation and foreign threats and everything else that eventually bubbled to the surface in the Meiji Restoration of 1868, which was, of course, framed as a bunch of samurai bringing down the system out of their professed loyalty to it." ○



THE MORAL QUESTION

The revenge of the 47 rōnin raised some serious questions about the samurai warrior code

Although the 47 rōnin were widely celebrated for avenging their lord, in the immediate aftermath there was some debate over their actions. On one hand, George Sansom points out that the Tokugawa "could not forbid acts of vengeance inspired by Confucian ideals of loyalty and piety." On the other, he says: "Persons intending to execute vengeance had to apply to the Bakufu for permission, which was usually granted."

Stephen Turnbull says the 47 rōnin prompted reactions ranging from admiration to condemnation: "The secrecy involved in their convoluted plot compounded the utter illegality and underhand nature of their act, to which the shōgun responded correctly by invoking the law of the land."

Jonathan Clements says the events cut right to the core of samurai values: "Armchair critics, and that was pretty much everybody in Japan, all had an opinion about the operation. Should they have struck sooner?" What if, he questions, the target had died of illness during the two-year planning stage? "Should they have been more open about it? Were they all victims of the Tokugawa system, trapped by a series of events set in motion by corrupt officialdom?" Clements adds: "The Tokugawa's fear was that every single possible confrontation in Japan risked being settled by battlefield rules."

The episode was an uncomfortable reminder of how the samurai, especially the Tokugawa, got to where they were. "They've spent 100 years telling everybody samurai are honourable and adhere to traditions, and suddenly there's a matter of samurai honour... and samurai tradition, that still turns out hyper-violent and murderous. It risks turning every back-alley stabbing into a revenge killing, every burglary into a justifiable military action, in the eyes of the people who commit those crimes."

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5 Things To Know About Kyivan Rus

A quick guide to a lost European nation that once dominated the east

Written by Jonathan Gordon

In the 11th century, the largest kingdom in Europe by territory was Kyivan Rus, but by 1240 and the successful siege of Kyiv by the Mongols, the empire had collapsed. The echoes of that kingdom continued in royal lines for centuries to come, but its lands were absorbed into new nations. More recently, the legacy of Rus has become a political football. Do the Rusian (not to be confused with Russian) leaders find their successor state in modern Ukraine? Does Russia have a reasonable claim to Kyivan Rus as its founder state? We spoke with Professor Christian Raffensperger of Wittenberg University, author of *The Kingdom of Rus'*, to pick through the webs of history to learn more about this medieval power.

Expert Bio

© Wittenberg University

Christian Raffensperger

Christian Raffensperger is a professor of history and chair of the department at Wittenberg University specialising in pre-modern and ancient world studies around medieval Europe, Russia and Ukraine. His books include *Reimagining Europe: Kievan Rus' in the Medieval World 988-1146* and *The Kingdom of Rus'*.

Its leaders had Scandinavian origins

The early rulers of Kyivan Rus are frequently referred to as being Vikings, which isn't entirely inaccurate. "The Scandinavians, referred to as Varangians in eastern Europe, were the founders of the kingdom of Rus. The original members of the family typically known as Riurikids were themselves Scandinavian," says Raffensperger. The Riurikid dynasty that ruled the region took its name from Riurik of Lagoda, a Varangian chieftain who arrived in Ladoga (now in modern-day Russia) in 862. It was his son Oleg who would then expand the reach of this new seat of power, with Riurik becoming a semi-legendary figure.

The familial roots back to Scandinavia can been seen in something as simple as the names of its key leaders. "The earliest rulers of Rus were Igor (Ingvarr in Scandinavian), Oleg (Helgi in Scandinavian), and Olga (Helga in Scandinavian). Moreover, the first Byzantine documents exchanged with Rus (10th century treaties) show a host of Scandinavian names representing Rus."

The generations of Riurikids that followed appear to have adapted more to local customs. "After these rulers, the Slavicisation of the Rusians increased and Olga and Igor's son was named Sviatoslav. After this time, the majority of Rusian rulers have Slavic names, though intermarriage with the Scandinavians continues as one of the most important avenues for outside contact with Rus."

RIGHT Oleg the Wise of Novgorod helped to lay the foundations of what would become Kyivan Rus and the Riurikid dynasty

It had a European style of rule

It's common to think of centralised power around a single king as being the norm in this era, but a looser relationship between polities was much more common across mainland Europe and Kyivan Rus followed this format. "Governance in Rus was similar to governance in much of the rest of Europe, but was not at all like what we see in England – which has been taken as the normative model of what medieval governance should be," Raffensperger tells us. "The ruler of Kyiv was the ruler of Rus, but he was not a monarch or absolute ruler. He was a king among many kings, and was acknowledged as the pater familias of the clan."

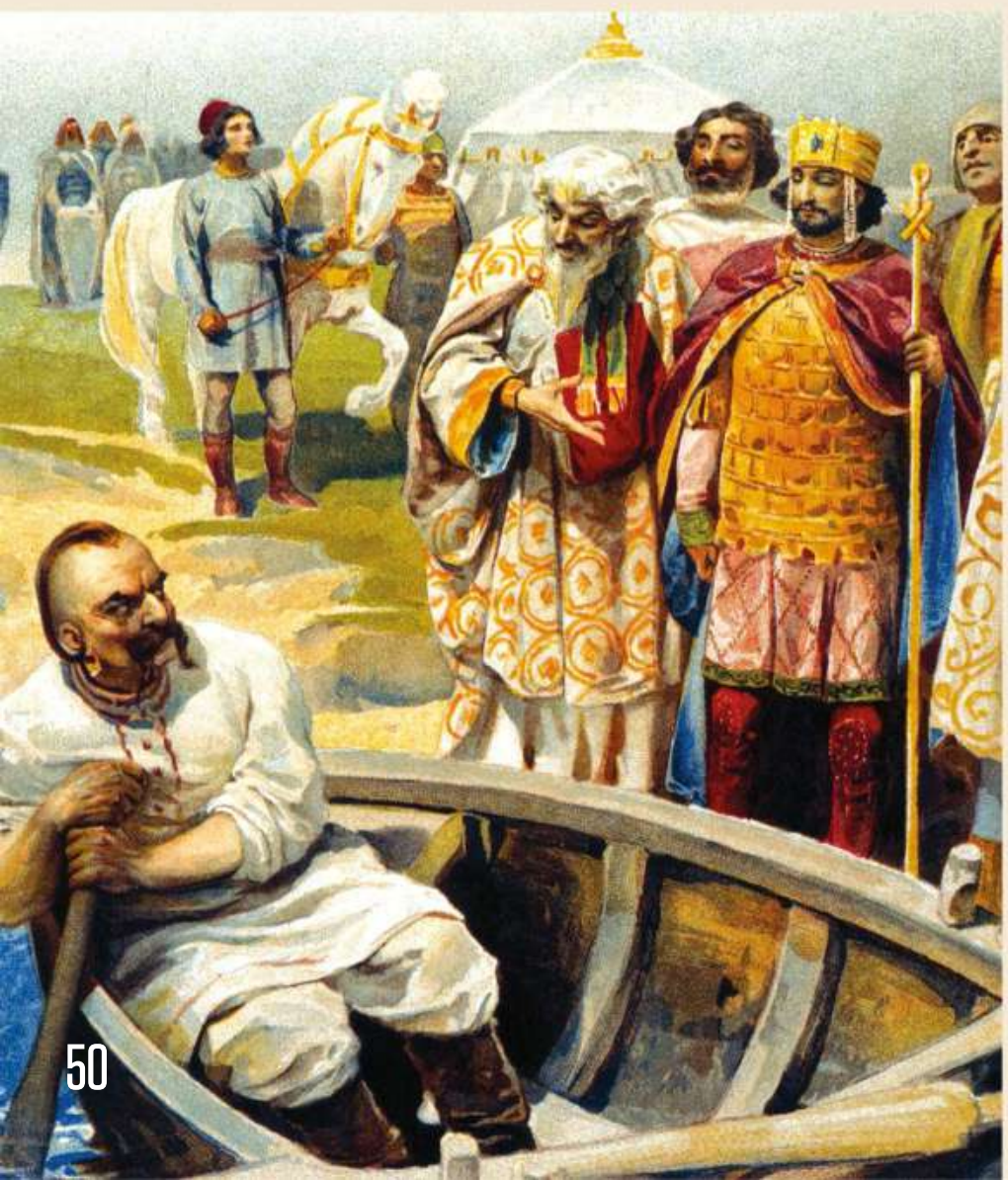
The ruler of Rus was the grand prince or grand duke of Kyiv and they collected tributes and taxes from neighbouring vasal states, often in the form of goods and food. This was known as 'poliudie', which was a Slavic word meaning the making of rounds as the prince would have to physically travel to collect these tributes. We know from Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus that these journeys would be made through winter, with goods being shipped down the Dnieper River to Constantinople for trade. Olga reformed this somewhat by setting up officials to gather and tally these tributes.

The grand prince still held most of the powers of a king, however. "The ruler of Kyiv collected taxes and tribute, he gathered forces for war against outside enemies, and assisted in keeping the peace internally. He created laws and had some sort of chancery for dealing with criminal matters. He authorised merchants to travel abroad, and much, much more," says Raffensperger.

ABOVE Subjects of Kyiv being baptised in 988 having previously adhered to the religions of Scandinavia

RIGHT Volodimer Monomakh was grand prince of Kyivan Rus from 1113 to 1125, about 130 years after Volodimer the Great

BELOW Svyatoslav I of Kyivan Rus meets with Emperor John Tzimiskes of Byzantium



Rus and the Byzantines

A common talking point about Kyivan Rus is to highlight its links to the Byzantine Empire, but really the kingdom was stuck between two powers; the other being the German Empire (what would become the base of the Holy Roman Empire). This can be seen by the different marital unions that were arranged with the imperial power in the west and one to the south. Certainly, the financial relationship between the Byzantines and Rus was important thanks to their connection along the Dnieper River, but Raffensperger believes suggestions of deeper links has been overplayed somewhat for political reasons.

"One of the major issues of understanding Rus in modern scholarship is the link to the Byzantine Empire," he says. "It was very important for the Muscovites of the early modern period and the Russians of the modern period to tie their history to Byzantium so that they could be the inheritors of the idea of Orthodox Empire. This resulted in the idea of a translation of power from Rome to Constantinople to Moscow – known as the 'Third Rome' idea. In reality, medieval Rus was not particularly connected to the Byzantine Empire, apart from religious ties.

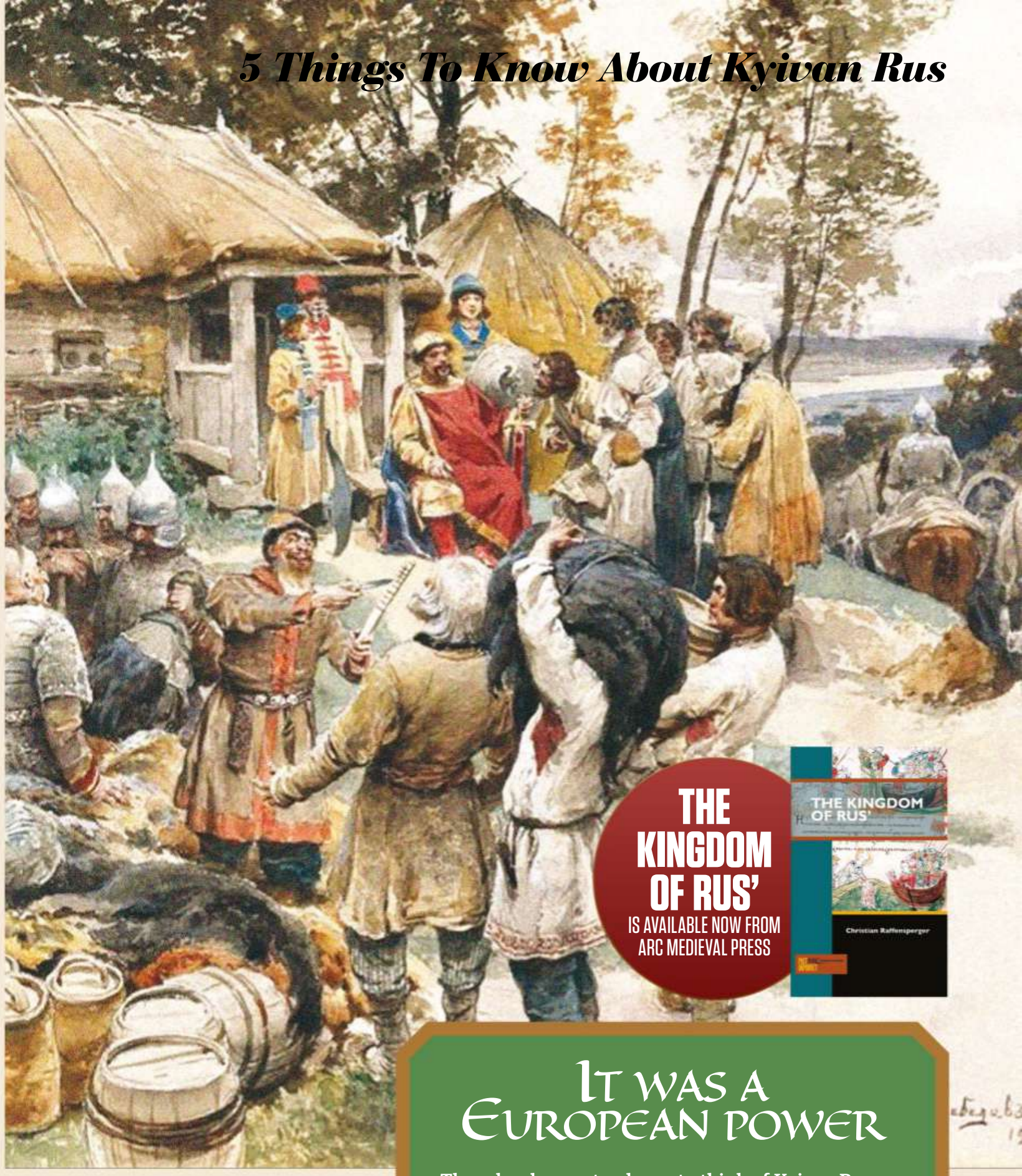
The ruling family of Rus made a few marriages with the Byzantine Empire over the medieval period, but apart from the first one of Volodimer Sviatoslavich to Anna Porphyrogenita in 988, they were relatively small-scale affairs and little recorded in Byzantine records. The Normans and Germans were much more connected to Byzantine imperial affairs than the Rusians were."

A history belonging to many

The question of the historical relationship between the modern states Ukraine, Russia and Belarus has been frequently debated. Kyivan Rus is namechecked in such discussions, since the region was ruled from Kyiv and covered much of the territory the three separate states, and Poland, now occupy.

Can they be said to share a claim to Kyivan Rus? "The medieval kingdom of Rus covers territory today that belongs to Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Poland. It was a polity that existed at the time and is not a modern polity, though the East Slavic states of today (Russia, Ukraine and Belarus) are all descended from it and work to claim that descent today," says Raffensperger.

As an example, Volodimer I (known as Vladimir in Russia and Volodymyr in Ukraine) has had a statue next to the Kremlin in Moscow since 2016. Vladimir Putin called him their "moral foundation" at the unveiling because the Rusian ruler had converted Rus to Christianity. Meanwhile, Volodimer the Great is also celebrated in Ukraine as the father of their independent state, with his image on bank notes. "The Russians have been the most successful in that claim, utilising their dominance in the Russian Empire to weave a narrative that Rus led to Russia," says Raffensperger. "Ukrainians have fought that narrative for over 100 years, but it is difficult to change something so entrenched. Do they all have equal claim? Yes. Is that how it is perceived by all? No."



THE KINGDOM OF RUS'
IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM ARC MEDIEVAL PRESS

ABOVE The collection of tribute from vasal states, called poliudie, was how Kyiv held sway over its empire

BELOW Volodimer I heading to Chersonesos in Crimea where he would be baptised and negotiated a marriage to Byzantine princess Anna

It was a European power

There has been a tendency to think of Kyivan Rus as an eastern nation, separate from the western European powers and belonging to a different lineage and history. This might have something to do with how the empire collapsed: it disintegrated into smaller princely fiefdoms and was conquered by the Mongols in the 13th century which, as Raffensperger says in his book *Reimagining Europe*, "cemented the separation of Slavic eastern Europe from the rest of the continent."

However, he insists we should still think about Rus in broader European terms: "I think the most important thing that I would want people to understand about Kyivan Rus is that it was a kingdom that was part of medieval Europe. Rusian rulers and their children intermarried with royalty from England, France, the German Empire, Hungary, Poland, Byzantium, Sweden, Norway and Denmark, as well as elsewhere. They had religious connections with both Byzantium and the papacy and were not sectioned off into an eastern 'Orthodox' part of Europe that could not interact with the rest of the Christian continent."

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What drove so many ancient cultures to sacrifice their fellow human beings?

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HUMAN SACRIFICE THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Professor Laerke Recht guides us through the evolution of ritual killings and why they were done

Written by Emily Staniforth

A cultural practice from ancient times, the gruesome subject of human sacrifice is one that has been tackled by historians, archaeologists and anthropologists alike. Only by bringing together evidence from across these academic disciplines can we achieve a well-rounded picture of how and why human sacrifice has been a feature of so many societies throughout history. "I've previously defined sacrifice as a religious ritual where a living being is deliberately killed in the process for the purposes of the event and usually in honour of a supernatural entity," says Professor Laerke Recht, an archaeologist and the author of *Human Sacrifice: Archaeological Perspectives from Around the World*.

"I would stress that this is a working definition and one that is in a sense artificial. It is not a definition that you would find in any ancient source as such, but one that allows me to specify the kinds of practices that I would include. It also covers a great variety of rituals, and many blur with other practices such as burials, wars and feasts."

EXPERT BIO

LAERKE RECHT

Laerke Recht is a professor of Early Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology at the University of Graz in Austria. She is also the author of *Human Sacrifice: Archaeological Perspectives from Around the World*.

The word 'sacrifice' literally means to 'make sacred', which is why most of our understanding of human sacrifice is so intertwined with the religion of the people who took part in it. But confining sacrifice to a purely religious phenomenon would be too simplistic. Given how many cultures, civilisations and eras human sacrifice has been important to, it can seem hard to pin down. The taking of a human life can often be associated with the assertion of power and authority, so this is something that must be considered when exploring human sacrifice. While religious duty and expressions of power can often cross over when discussing human sacrifice, it is good to keep the two factors in mind when looking at sacrificial practices from across the world.

In Greek mythology, one of the most famous examples of a human sacrifice is that of Iphigenia. The daughter of King Agamemnon of Mycenae, Iphigenia was demanded as a sacrifice by the goddess Artemis after Agamemnon killed a sacred deer. The story goes that Artemis conjured up ill winds that prevented the Achaean army from sailing to Troy at the time of the Trojan War. Agamemnon tricked Iphigenia into meeting him, but when she arrived she saw the sacrificial altar that had been constructed. Many versions of the myth say that Iphigenia accepted her fate and willingly walked to the altar, knowing that her death would be a heroic one. Agamemnon could not bring himself to commit the sacrifice himself, and struggled to find any of his men who would carry out the killing of the king's daughter. Eventually, the task was left to Calchas, the seer who had told Agamemnon of Artemis' rage.

Some versions of the tale have Artemis rescuing Iphigenia and replacing her with a deer as the knife came down at the altar. Some have Iphigenia dying. Either way, the sacrifice worked and the winds calmed, allowing the waiting army to sail to Troy.

While Ancient Greece is not associated with being prolific in human sacrifice, the Aztecs are probably the most notorious and well-known practitioners in history. The Spanish conquistador Bernal Diaz del Castillo gave detailed descriptions of the customs of human sacrifice that confronted the Spaniards when they marched into Mexico in 1519.

Welcomed by the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma II, Castillo recorded what the Spanish visitors were told: "Respecting the abominable human sacrifices of these people, the following was communicated to us: the breast of the unhappy victim destined to be sacrificed was ripped open with a knife made of sharp flint; the throbbing heart was then torn out, and immediately offered to the idol-god in whose honour the sacrifice had been instituted. After this, the head, arms and legs were cut off and eaten at their banquets, with the exception of the head, which was saved and hung to a beam appropriated for that purpose. No other part of the body was eaten, but the remainder was thrown to the beasts that were kept in those abominable dens."

ABOVE This Aztec knife used for human sacrifice dates to around 1500

RIGHT A depiction of an ancient Aztec sacrifice ritual

BELOW The sacrifice of Iphigenia

THE THROBBING HEART WAS THEN TORN OUT AND IMMEDIATELY OFFERED TO THE IDOL-GOD

Stories of sacrifice like this are common in Greek mythology, and highlight how human sacrifice was believed to work by the Greeks, but for a long time it was largely believed that the presence of human sacrifice in ancient Greece was confined to fiction.

However, in 2016 the bones of a teenager were discovered by archaeologists on Mount Lykaion that confirm that human sacrifice was not just a literary phenomenon. Recht also highlights some Minoan remains found in Crete that indicate the presence of human sacrifice in the ancient Greek world. "Bones of children were found in a house in a context that suggests some sort of ritual activity. The bones were completely disarticulated and had the kinds of cut marks that we usually see on butchered animals. Had they been animal bones, they would be interpreted as cuts of meat and exploitation of the bodies for consumption, and it has therefore been proposed that this was a case of cannibalism. This came as a bit of a shock since the Minoans otherwise have a reputation for having been a peaceful and nature loving people," she says.

While sacrifice, accompanied by cannibalism, sounds horrifically uncivilised to a modern reader, as it would have done to Western Europeans at the time, it does not mean that the Aztecs were an uncivilised society. In fact, the conquistadors themselves were surprised by the orderliness and cleanliness of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan. Historian Caroline Dodds Pennock says in her book *Bonds of Blood: Gender, Lifecycle and Sacrifice in Aztec Culture*: "The distinctively bloody nature of their culture has tempted history to place them beyond the norms of human social behaviour, accounting for their brutal rituals by removing them from the expectations of civilisation."

The Aztecs performed human sacrifices to help their god Huitzilopochtli who, according to their mythology, was locked in an eternal struggle with darkness. The Aztecs believed that by sacrificing humans to Huitzilopochtli, he would keep the Sun moving across the sky and prevent the end of the world. Other gods in the Aztec pantheon also required sacrifice, and sometimes people willingly offered themselves to be killed in these rituals as

RELYING ON EVIDENCE

Why we need to be careful when trying to understand human sacrifice

Evidence is key when trying to understand how and why different civilisations took part in human sacrifice rituals. However, evidence can sometimes be misleading, especially when it comes to written sources and eyewitness accounts. A lot of the written accounts that record occasions of human sacrifice are written by those outside of the societies that took part in it. It is therefore important to take what these accounts tell us about human sacrifice with a pinch of salt. The killing of a human being is a shocking and disturbing act to those for whom it is not a part of their everyday life and culture. Therefore, any account written by an outsider watching these events is likely to be subject to bias or exaggeration.

It is also important to note that some of the societies that did practise human sacrifice were indigenous and the people who reported on their activities were part of colonial forces from other states. This is particularly crucial when looking at Mesoamerican civilisations like the Aztec, Maya and Inca rituals as much of the source evidence has a colonial heritage and will be subject to bias. We can always look for evidence in the archaeological remains and finds of the civilisation in question to help create a clearer picture. However, this can never be conclusive as without reliable eyewitness accounts we can only make educated assumptions about what the archaeological evidence tells us.

RIGHT A sacrificial stone found at the Mayan Copan ruins in Honduras

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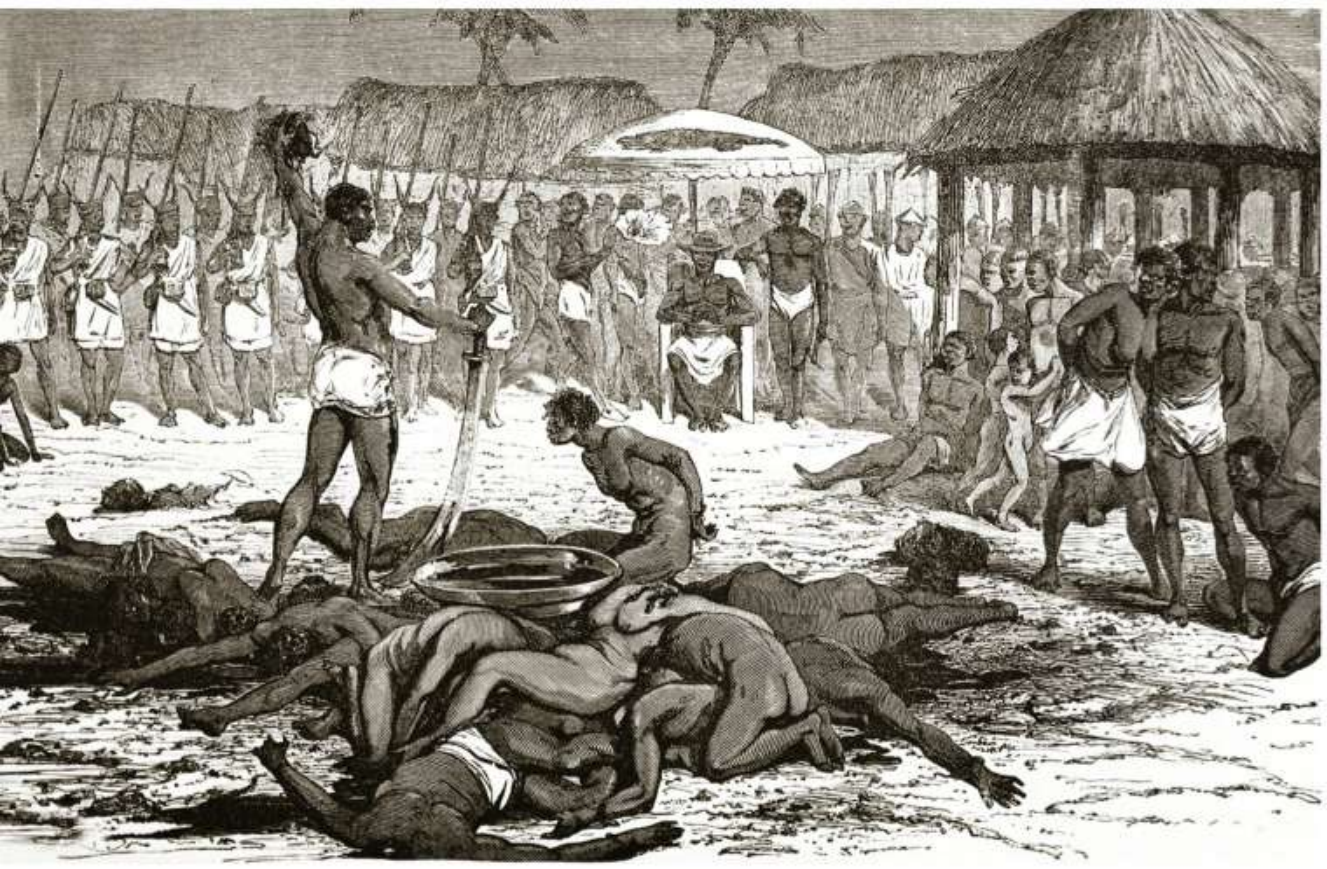

LEFT
A sacrifice involving decapitation in Dahomey, Africa

they believed it to be a noble death that would advantage them in the afterlife. However, the Aztecs didn't just sacrifice their own people. Prisoners of war, taken during the expansion of the empire, were prime offerings. "Given that human sacrifice is a nasty business, it is perhaps not surprising that people often tried to minimise its emotional and financial costs," historian Jan N Bremmer wrote in *The Strange World of Human Sacrifice*. But while the Aztecs were particularly brutal in their methods, they were not alone in practising these bloody rituals.

The African kingdom of Dahomey (c.1600 – 1904) took a similar approach to the Aztecs when honouring their custom of human sacrifice. While taking part in wars against neighbouring states, the Dahomey warriors would capture people to bring back to their kingdom where

RUTHLESS ROMANS

The Romans may have disapproved of human sacrifice but they were still a bloodthirsty civilisation

According to many of the writers, historians and statesmen of Ancient Rome, human sacrifice was largely considered to be an abhorrent ritual that was carried out by the uncivilised societies that existed outside of the empire. But, while they criticised others, human sacrifice had occasionally been a feature of Roman society. Referred to as a 'ritual killing', in the minds of the Romans it was justified and less barbaric than the sacrifices of other civilisations. However, the Romans were quite happy to pit men against each other in the arena without being ashamed of their bloodlust.

Gladiatorial combat was one of the most popular forms of entertainment among the Roman people, and citizens would pay to watch men slaughtering each other or being mauled to death by wild and exotic animals. Though the gladiators were not sacrificial victims to a deity, they could be seen as being victims sacrificed for the purpose of the crowd's entertainment. Some gladiators knew what they signed up for, but it wasn't just volunteers fighting. Slaves, criminals and prisoners of war were also put to death in the arena, either at the hands of each other, an executioner or a wild beast. These people did not have a choice and are therefore more akin to the sacrificial victims of other societies who did practise human sacrifice. Though the Romans did not call it human sacrifice and did not partake in a ritual to a deity, they were not necessarily any more civilised than the communities that did.

ABOVE The Wicker Man was alleged to have been used by the druids of Gaul and was recorded by Julius Caesar

TOP-INSET The Terracotta Army may have been a substitute for human sacrifice

BOTTOM-INSET Tollund Man was found in a bog in Denmark

they would become slaves, be sold to European traders or become victims of human sacrifice. Some historians have suggested that human sacrifice was an efficient way for the Dahomey kingdom to deal with an excess of POWs, but it seems unlikely that they would kill them when they could have profited from selling them into slavery. It is more likely that sacrifice was used as a celebratory outlet after a successful military endeavour to honour the kingdom. However, like the Aztecs, victims of sacrifice in Dahomey were not always recent prisoners of war. An annual ceremony saw the sacrifice of hundreds of slaves to honour the ancestral kings of the state, and slaves were often massacred upon the death of a king.

One of the most fascinating archaeological discoveries regarding human sacrifice was made in 1950 when a preserved body was found in a peat bog in Denmark. Tollund Man was initially thought to be a recent murder victim as his body was so well-preserved, but further investigation found that he had been killed more than 2,000 years ago (between 405 BCE and 380 BCE) and was probably a victim of human sacrifice. The writings of the Roman historian Tacitus have confirmed that the Germanic Celts who inhabited Iron Age Denmark did practise human sacrifice as a method of religious worship. Archaeologists believe that Tollund Man may have been sacrificed as an offering to a god to ensure the fertility of the land, which would account for his burial in a peat bog. The leather rope still tied around his neck showed that he had been hanged and his body, exceptionally well preserved and carefully arranged into a foetal position, indicated his death wasn't the result of malice. Over 500 bodies like Tollund Man's, dating from the Iron Age, have been found in bogs throughout Denmark, suggesting that their deaths were the result of a common sacrificial ritual for the Celts to ensure the gods granted a good crop.

Years later, sacrifice remained a relevant practice in Scandinavia, despite the disappearance of the Celts. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Vikings also practised human sacrifice, as do contemporaneous written accounts. In 1072 the German chronicler Adam of Bremen recorded an event he had witnessed in Sweden, where Vikings had gathered to sacrifice nine males from several species, including humans, at a temple dedicated to the Norse gods, Odin, Thor and Freyja. According to Adam, this event took place every nine years and the human victims were left hanging from

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BELOW-LEFT
A photographer captures the moment a kamikaze plane hits its target, 1944

BELOW-RIGHT
Recovering the wreckage of a kamikaze plane, 1945

trees in the sacred grove by the temple alongside the animal offerings. Remains of sacrificial victims, including children, have been found at the bottom of deep wells in Sweden alongside jewels and tools, presumed to be an offering to Odin, for whom wells held a special significance.

As well as sacrifice being a way of communicating and honouring the deities of a religion, the practice was also used to honour the dead. Much like the people of the Dahomey Kingdom sacrificing slaves on the occasion of a king dying, human sacrifices as a funerary ritual have been a feature of several societies throughout history. As Recht states, the sacrificing of a human was not only done to worship a specific supernatural element: "This element need not be a concrete, well-developed deity – it can be an ancestor, or the ancestors in a more generic sense, or something more akin to what we might call a demon or a spirit or even natural features such as a spring, a forest and so on. It is important to understand the dynamics of these elements in any given culture in order to understand why human sacrifice occurred."

Sacrificing people to accompany the dead into the afterlife can be seen in Viking culture, with archaeologists having identified multiple burials. While it would not be accurate to say that all multiple burials from this period are a result of human sacrifice, some are likely to be. In some graves, the body of a respectfully positioned elite man has been found accompanied by poorer people who have clearly been buried with less care. This evidence, along with written accounts from chroniclers like the Arab writer Ahmad Ibn Fadlan, have helped historians and archaeologists to understand the role of human sacrifice in Viking funerals. Ibn Fadlan, writing in the 10th century, recorded his experience at a ship burial for a chieftain of the Volga Vikings, at which he saw the sacrifice of a young girl. He claims the girl, a slave, willingly volunteered to go along with the ritual where she was raped, stabbed and strangled before being placed in the ship alongside her master.

Similarly, in Ancient Egypt slaves or servants were sacrificed upon the death of their master to accompany them to the afterlife. "Some of the earliest instances [of human sacrifice] that I have studied come from Egypt, and all appear to be related to burials," says Recht. While this practice only existed for a short period of time, it was done on a grand scale. Called 'retainer sacrifice', it was mostly practised by pharaohs and used to highlight the importance and authority of the Egyptian rulers during the First Dynasty.

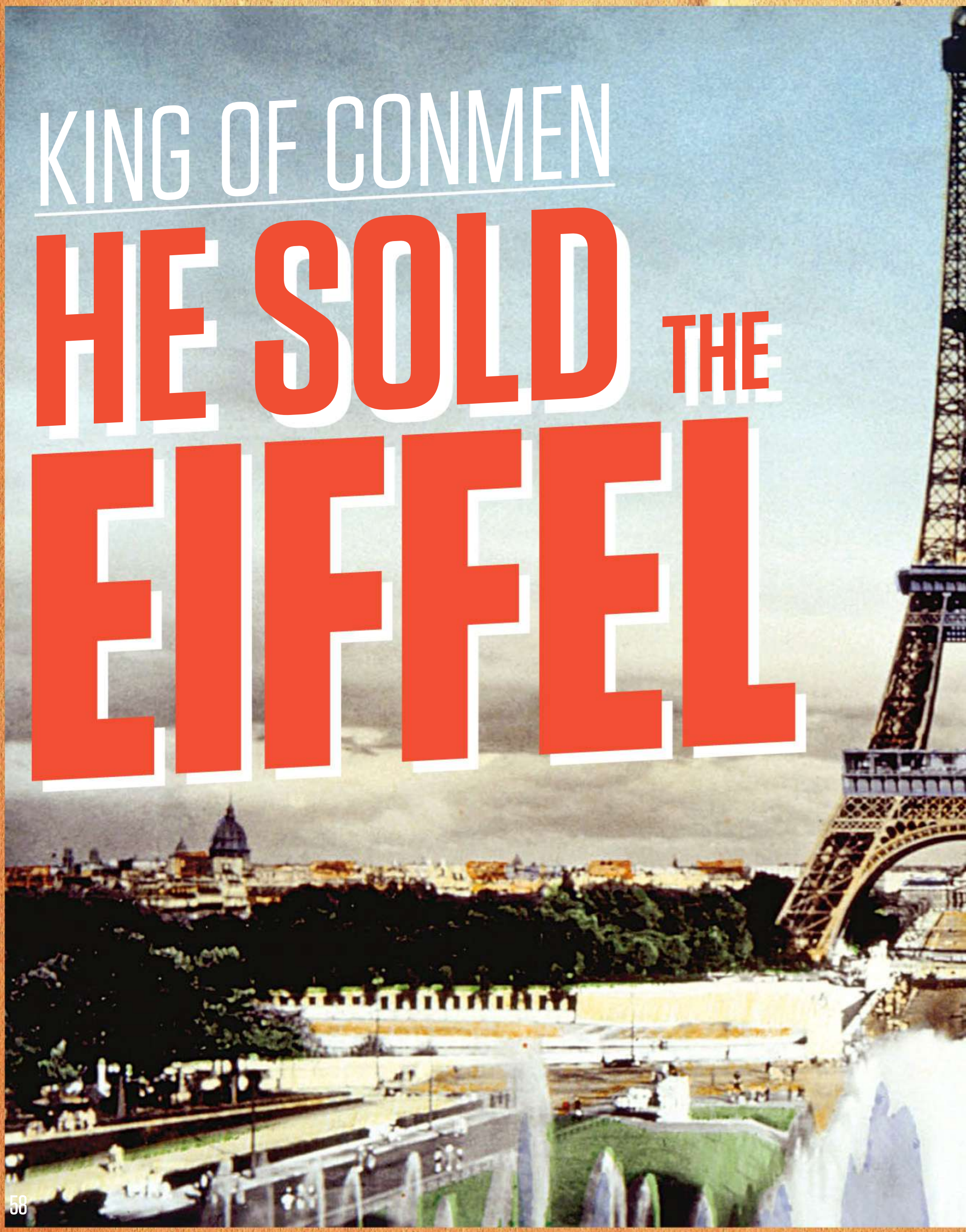
In ancient China, human sacrifice was also a major part of the funeral ritual. The Xibeigang cemetery, from the Shang period (c.1600 – c.1046 BCE), is a prime example of these rituals. "This royal cemetery contained thousands of burials and sacrificial pits, typically with several skeletons in each, pointing to another example where human (and animal) sacrifices were performed regularly and on a fairly large scale," says Recht. Though human sacrifice was not officially banned in China until the 17th century, it was not always a favourable activity. The Terracotta Army, built for and buried in the royal tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Huang (259 – 210 BCE), is believed by some historians and archaeologists to have been commissioned as a more humane way to provide protection for the emperor in the afterlife.

THE HUMAN VICTIMS WERE LEFT HANGING FROM TREES IN THE SACRED GROVE

While we might condemn human sacrifice as an archaic practice of the past it is important to remember that related practices are still present in society. In times of war, it is common to hear people talk of the sacrifices of soldiers for their cause and their country. During WWII, Japanese Kamikaze crashed their planes into enemy targets for the honour of dying for their country and emperor. Modern-day terrorists blow themselves up in suicide bombings for their beliefs, some thinking they will be rewarded in the afterlife. It is easy to denounce the ancient practice of human sacrifice as a barbaric act and believe that we are far removed from it, but as long as religion and power are important factors in people's lives the practice of human sacrifice might always be a possibility.

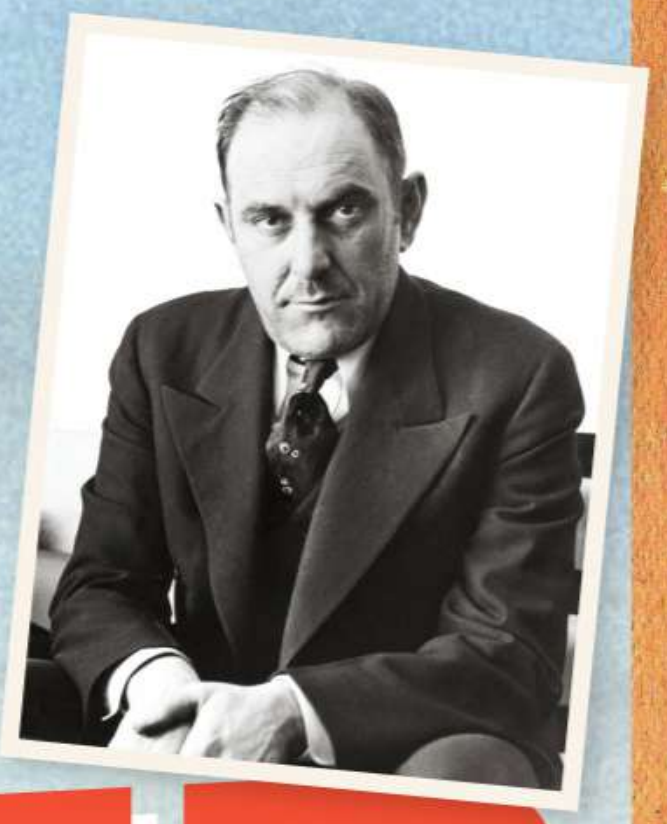
KING OF CONMEN

HE SOLD THE EIFFEL



Victor Lustig stands out in criminal history as a swindler supreme who successfully 'sold' the Eiffel Tower – then had the audacity to try exactly the same con again

Written by Robert Walsh



TOWER

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‘Count’ Victor Lustig wasn’t a count, king, prince or any other form of aristocrat. Unless, of course, you happened to be what conmen call a ‘mark’. To his victims, Lustig was whatever they wanted him to be until he’d taken their money and run.

Conmen are common coin in the underworld, mostly unexceptional and seldom rating much attention. The smart ones, and Lustig was definitely one of them, like it that way. The less attention they draw, the greater their freedom to operate. The freer they are, the more marks they can fleece. Like most conmen, Lustig wasn’t violent but, in his own way, he was every bit as predatory as any other career felon. As Lustig admitted: “Everything turns grey when I don’t have at least one mark on the horizon. Life seems empty and depressing. I cannot understand honest men. They lead desperate lives, full of boredom.”

Born on 4 January 1890 in Arnau, Austria-Hungary (now Hostinne and within the Czech Republic), Lustig started as a juvenile offender as a beggar, pickpocket, burglar, street hustler and remarkably talented card sharp. His dishonesty was innate and until World War I he was making a tidy living conning passengers aboard ocean liners running between France and the USA. When war began, Lustig’s Atlantic cons were over and, after the war, he had to start again. For a man fluent in Czech, English, German, French and Italian, and possessing a remarkable sense of other people’s weaknesses, this was easier for him than for most.

Lustig moved fast. A favourite scam was the ‘Rumanian money box scam’ involving a wooden box that purportedly printed $100 bills. Lustig’s keen eye for other people’s greed saw him sell them to crooked clients, telling them the box could produce genuine bank notes, but only one every six hours. He’d demonstrate how it worked and, with a couple of genuine bank notes in their hand, marks often paid $30,000 or more for what they thought was a licence to print money. Pocketing their cash, Lustig would disappear before they realised that the notes were genuine only because Lustig had put them there and that the box only produced one or two more before running out. Of course, printing your own bank notes (genuine or otherwise) is a serious crime. His clients risked incriminating themselves by involving the police.

It worked well and often, but Lustig, an inveterate swindler and egoist, wanted something bigger. He found it in 1925 while reading a Paris newspaper article bemoaning France’s post-war financial crisis and the ruinous maintenance costs of a certain local landmark. Lustig decided on one of the most outrageous scams in criminal history: he would ‘sell’ the Eiffel Tower.

SCRAP METAL

Lustig chose his marks carefully: six scrap metal dealers he thought would be readily susceptible to his criminal wiles. Using another forger, he obtained flawlessly forged government stationery. Six letters, purportedly from the ‘Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs’, invited them to a secret meeting at the Hotel de Criton, one of Paris’ most prestigious hotels. The letters also demanded absolute secrecy. They were being invited to consider a very lucrative transaction and, naturally, the government wanted it kept quiet. During the meeting, they would find out exactly why.

At the hotel, they met Lustig and his ‘personal assistant’ Franco-American conman Robert Arthur Tourbillon, alias ‘Dapper Dan’ Collins, who already had 57 arrests on his record. Lustig explained that the Eiffel Tower was to be scrapped and, knowing the immense public backlash that would follow, the government wanted the deal done before it became public knowledge. With that in mind, maximum secrecy and speed were essential – so bids had to be in by the next day.

© Getty Images

ABOVE Lustig being questioned. His nemesis Secret Service Agent Peter Rubano, who previously caught Mafioso Ignazio ‘Lupo the Wolf’ Saetta, is on the right

RIGHT Al Capone, still the world’s most notorious gangster. Lustig had the nerve to try conning him and the skill to get away with it

“FAR FROM PUTTING THEM OFF, REQUESTING A LARGE BRIBE CONVINCED THEM THAT LUSTIG SIMPLY MUST BE A GENUINE OFFICIAL”

The marks were awed by the deal, and one of them, Andre Poisson, was particularly interested. Poisson was a minnow in Parisian business and wanted to join the big leagues. This deal would immensely boost both his professional status and his ego. Poisson’s insecurity and ambition made him Lustig’s preferred bidder.

Unlike Poisson and Lustig, Poisson’s wife was far less keen and far more suspicious. Why did the deal have to be done so quickly? Why in such secrecy? She distrusted and disliked this all-too-plausible ‘government official’ and his deal that simply looked too good to be true. If it looked too good to be true, she felt, it almost certainly was.

It was time for the former card sharp to slip an ace from his sleeve. Lustig rose brilliantly to the occasion. It was no secret that many Parisian officials were perfectly bribable, and the Poissons knew that. At a private meeting, Lustig explained that, being unable to live well on his salary, he had to supplement his income. For a large bribe, Poisson could seal the deal.

It was genius. Poisson had a ready explanation for any initial doubts about Lustig. Far from putting them off, requesting a large bribe convinced them that Lustig simply must be a genuine government official (which says little for the honesty thereof). The bribe, tens of thousands of francs, was paid immediately in cash.

Lustig hadn't just lured them into 'buying' the Eiffel Tower, they'd also paid extra to become footnotes in criminal history.

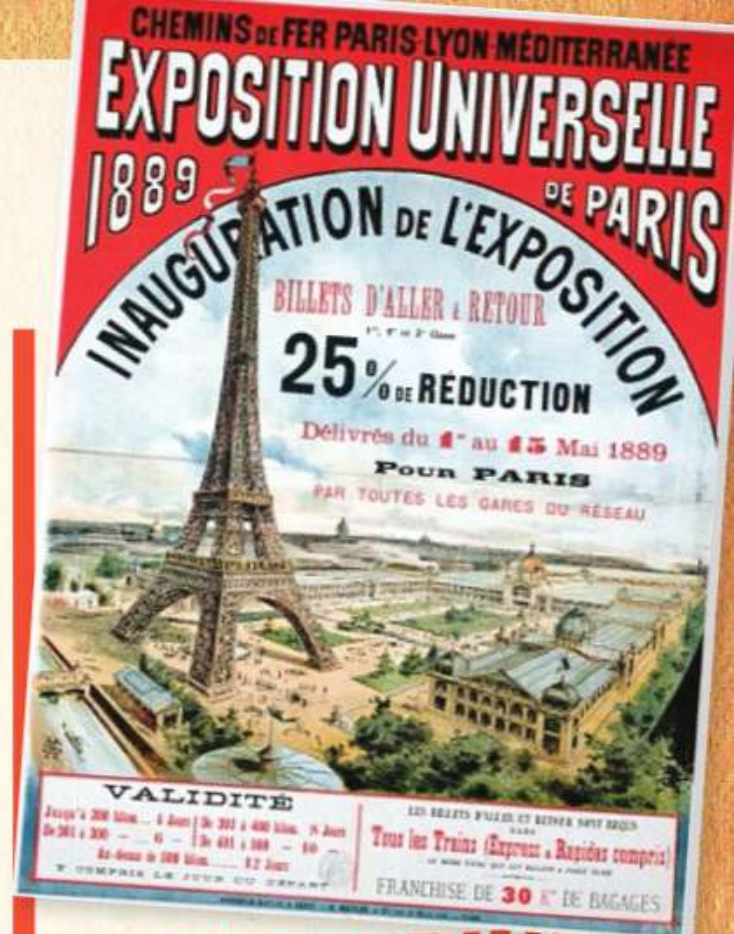
With the bribe came the asking price for the Tower itself. By the time Poisson had discovered the scam, Lustig and Tourbillon were safely in Vienna, their suitcase bulging with bank notes. Poisson, too humiliated to involve police, gained only a forged government letter and a harsh lesson to put his business sense before his ambition. It was the high point of Lustig's criminal career.

It would have been even better if he hadn't tried it twice. Only weeks later Lustig and Tourbillon were back in Paris with more fake stationery and some new marks, intending to work the scam again. Unfortunately, their intended mark saw through their spiel and informed the police. They avoided arrest, but the good times in Paris were over. Now working alone, Lustig, seeing the USA as the land of opportunity, promptly headed across the Atlantic to continue his career.

A CON TOO FAR

Initially, things went well. Lustig revived the money box scam, taking $132,000 from a corrupt Texas sheriff and county tax collector. He ran real-estate scams, sold fake stock market deals and fleeced greedy investors with shares in non-existent

Image source: wiki/FBI



A TOWERING TEMPTATION

Today, the notion of conning someone into buying this globally renowned landmark would be ridiculous

Built originally as part of the 1889 Paris Exposition, the Eiffel Tower was never initially intended as a permanent structure, merely a temporary attraction. At the time of Lustig's scam, France was in severe financial difficulty, the Tower itself was in poor condition (as Lustig proved by having the audacity to take his marks on an inspection tour during his swindle) and the cost of upkeep for a depressed economy really was very high. The idea of scrapping it may sound preposterous today but, in the eyes of Lustig and his victims, it wasn't nearly as unlikely a proposition as it first sounds.

When Lustig invited his marks to an upscale, quiet hotel room and told them that, "Because of engineering faults, costly repairs and political problems I cannot discuss, the tearing down of the Eiffel Tower has become mandatory," they were so intrigued by the secrecy and political nature of the deal that the idea of it being a big swindle simply didn't cross their minds.

There had even been plans to move the Tower, taking it down piece by piece and rebuilding it somewhere else prior to Lustig's scam. With a little context, it's a lot easier to see how Andre Poisson was so easily taken in by the con. Lustig's ploy to 'sell' the Tower, while outrageous, had a thin veneer of plausibility that convinced his victim it was a genuine deal.

Image source: wiki/Musée Carnavalet, Histoire de Paris

“THE DAY BEFORE HIS TRIAL WAS DUE TO BEGIN, HE PROVED THAT THE ‘ESCAPE-PROOF’ PRISON WAS RATHER LESS SECURE THAN THE FEDS HAD HOPED”

racehorses. He even managed another criminal feat rarely attempted (and more rarely achieved) by swindling a well-known American gangster whose place in criminal history far exceeds Lustig’s – none other than Al Capone.

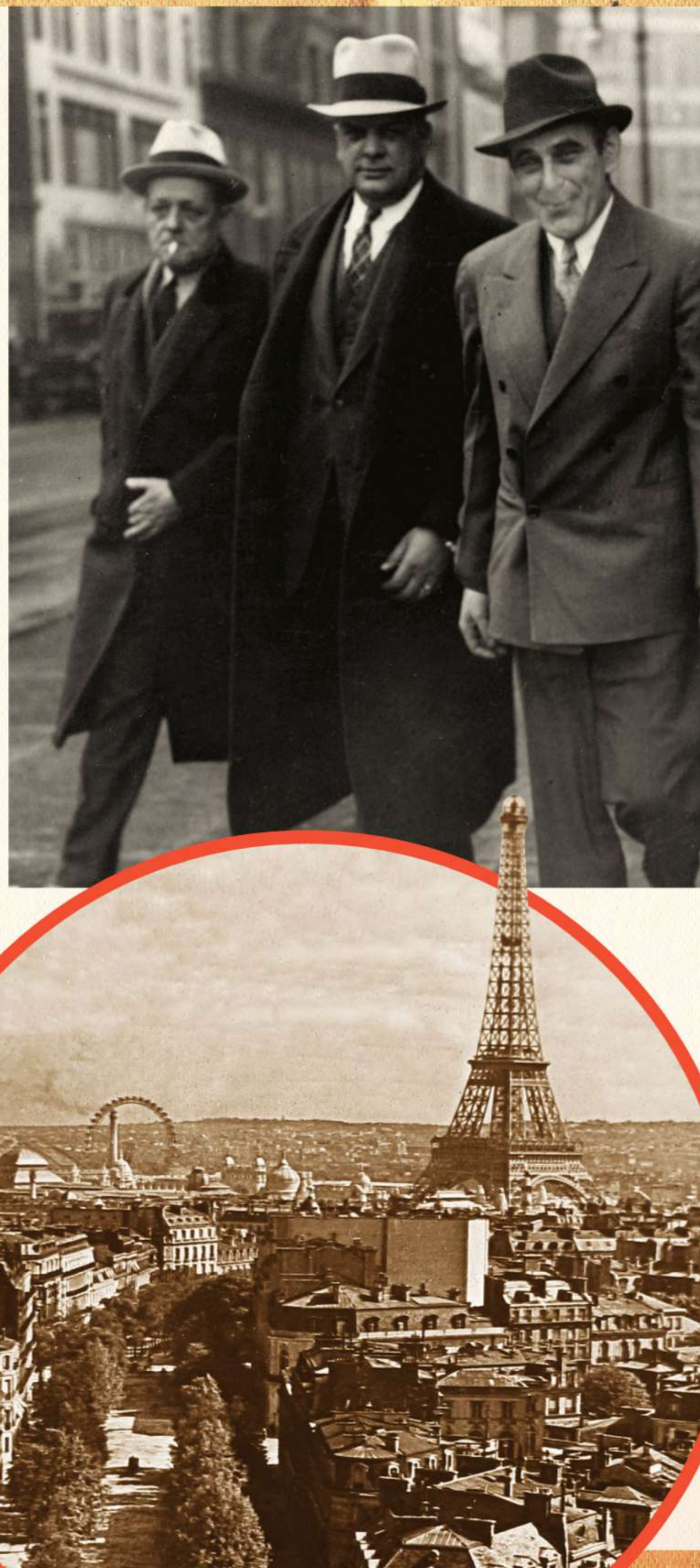
Lustig duped Capone into handing him $50,000 to invest in a non-existent share deal. Knowing Capone’s tendency to murder double-crossers and equal generosity towards those he considered loyal, Lustig stashed the cash in a safe deposit box for two months before telling Capone the deal had collapsed. Capone, appreciating Lustig’s ‘honesty’, promptly gave him $5,000 as a reward – which, of course, was what Lustig had wanted all along. Capone never knew that he’d been taken, let alone by one of crime’s greatest swindlers, which probably accounts for Lustig remaining alive to set up one last scam that would permanently end his crime spree. This time he entered the forgery business.

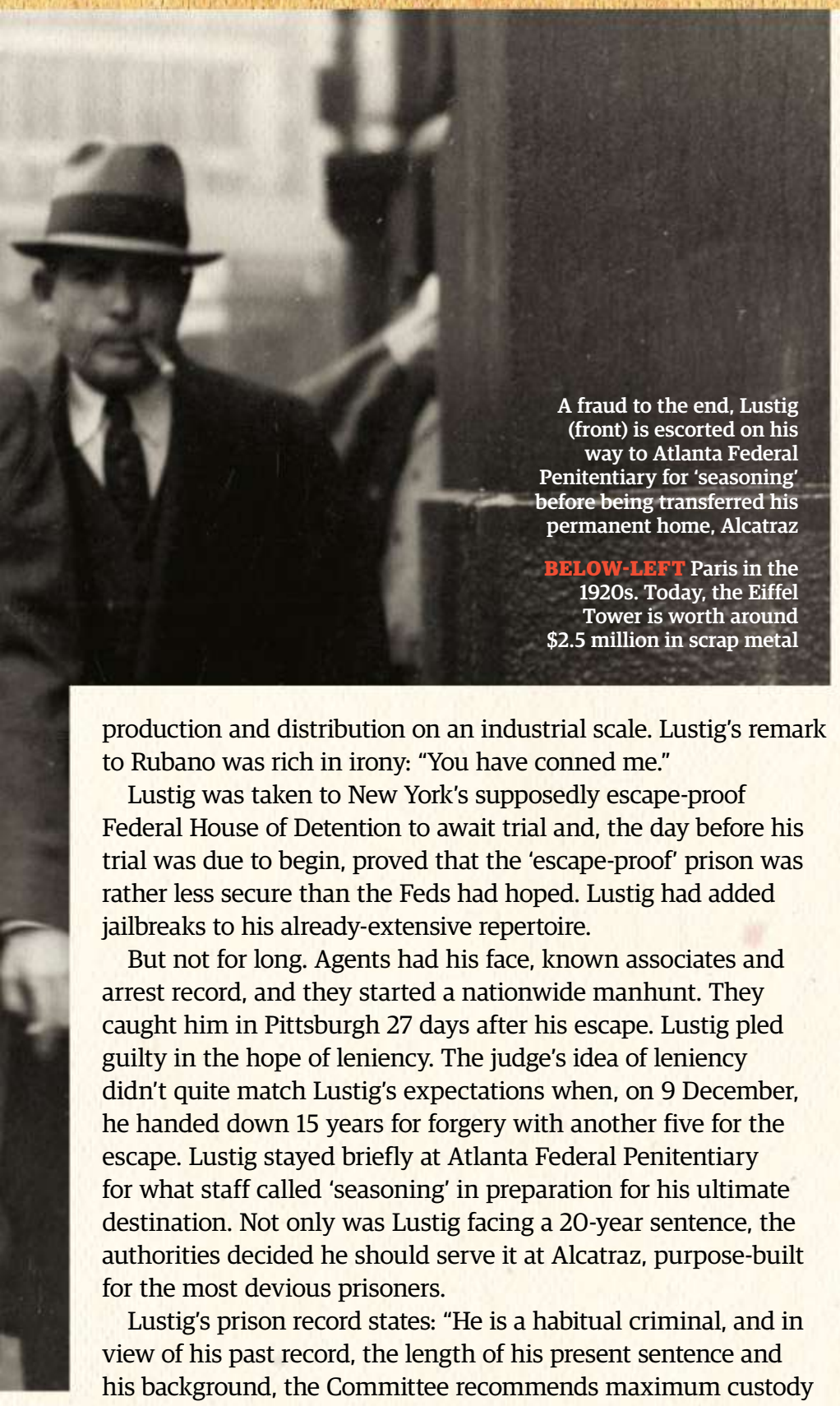
In May 1930, he teamed up with notorious forger William Watts and, between them, they ran a forgery ring specialising in counterfeit American bank notes. Extremely good counterfeit American bank notes. So good, in fact, Joseph Boling, chief judge of the American Numismatic Association (numismatics is the study of coins and bank notes) and an expert in forged currency, said: “Lustig-Watts notes were the supernotes of the era.”

The Treasury Department and the United States Secret Service, however, begged to differ. What they called ‘Lustig money’ were superlative forgeries, but they were still forgeries. They were so good and produced in such huge numbers that they were considered a serious threat to the stability of the USA’s economy. They immediately started hunting whoever was producing and distributing this top-quality funny money. Secret Service Agent Peter Rubano, previously having sent Mafioso Ignazio ‘Lupo the Wolf’ Saetta to prison for 30 years for forgery, was despatched with one single mission: nail Lustig.

The chase was epic. Rubano followed Lustig all over the country while the conman hid behind a multitude of false identities and disguises. Rubano initially had little to go on, but the biggest threat to Lustig lay very much closer to home.

His mistress, Billy May, was jealous and furious that Lustig, an avowed womaniser, had cheated on her with the mistress of his crime partner William Watts. The saying goes that hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, and this is especially true of a woman who can tell the authorities that her errant boyfriend will be on a particular New York street corner at a particular time and date. On 10 May 1935, Lustig was arrested on that very street corner. While no forged money was found on him, Lustig being too clever to carry the stuff, a locker key from the Times Square subway station was found. In the locker, Rubano found $51,000 in forged bank notes and the printing plates used to make them. Rubano had Lustig not only for possession of forged currency but also its





A fraud to the end, Lustig (front) is escorted on his way to Atlanta Federal Penitentiary for 'seasoning' before being transferred his permanent home, Alcatraz

BELOW-LEFT Paris in the 1920s. Today, the Eiffel Tower is worth around $2.5 million in scrap metal

production and distribution on an industrial scale. Lustig's remark to Rubano was rich in irony: "You have conned me."

Lustig was taken to New York's supposedly escape-proof Federal House of Detention to await trial and, the day before his trial was due to begin, proved that the 'escape-proof' prison was rather less secure than the Feds had hoped. Lustig had added jailbreaks to his already-extensive repertoire.

But not for long. Agents had his face, known associates and arrest record, and they started a nationwide manhunt. They caught him in Pittsburgh 27 days after his escape. Lustig pled guilty in the hope of leniency. The judge's idea of leniency didn't quite match Lustig's expectations when, on 9 December, he handed down 15 years for forgery with another five for the escape. Lustig stayed briefly at Atlanta Federal Penitentiary for what staff called 'seasoning' in preparation for his ultimate destination. Not only was Lustig facing a 20-year sentence, the authorities decided he should serve it at Alcatraz, purpose-built for the most devious prisoners.

Lustig's prison record states: "He is a habitual criminal, and in view of his past record, the length of his present sentence and his background, the Committee recommends maximum custody and discipline. He is of the type who will no doubt try to gain the confidence of any officer with whom he may become familiar. His ability in this respect should be given maximum consideration." Considering his history of escape attempts, serial dishonesty and that he was wanted by 45 law enforcement bodies (under 25 aliases) at the time of his arrest, this seems a fairly accurate character assessment.

Typically, Lustig allowed himself to be arrested, tried, convicted, sentenced and jailed under a false name: Robert V Miller. Equally typically, Alcatraz staff didn't care what name he used. To them he was simply AZ-300 and, being standard practice, his name didn't even appear on his Alcatraz mugshot. 'Miller' remained there until 9 March 1947 when, suffering from pneumonia, he was shipped to the Medical Centre for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Missouri, where he died, still under an assumed name, two days later.

The mood was lightened somewhat by an unlikely source – Lustig's death certificate. Still listed as 'Robert V Miller', the certificate contained one final parting joke befitting of a man with such a wry a sense of humour: under 'Occupation' it listed him as 'Apprentice salesman'.

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REAL CRIME:
KILLER CASE FILES

LUSTIG'S TEN COMMANDMENTS

These rules that all conmen should follow are attributed to Lustig, though this is unconfirmed

1. BE A PATIENT LISTENER (IT IS THIS, NOT FAST-TALKING, THAT GETS A CON MAN HIS COUPS)
2. NEVER LOOK BORED
3. WAIT FOR THE OTHER PERSON TO REVEAL ANY POLITICAL OPINIONS, THEN AGREE WITH THEM
4. LET THE OTHER PERSON REVEAL RELIGIOUS VIEWS, THEN HAVE THE SAME ONES
5. HINT AT SEX TALK, BUT DON'T FOLLOW IT UP UNLESS THE OTHER PERSON SHOWS A STRONG INTEREST
6. NEVER DISCUSS ILLNESS, UNLESS SOME SPECIAL CONCERN IS SHOWN
7. NEVER PRY INTO A PERSON'S PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES (THEY'LL TELL YOU ALL EVENTUALLY)
8. NEVER BOAST – JUST LET YOUR IMPORTANCE BE QUIETLY OBVIOUS
9. NEVER BE UNTIDY
10. NEVER GET DRUNK

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Greatest Battles

BATTLE OF PLATAEA

DODECANESE ISLANDS, GREECE, 23 MAY – 17 AUG 1480

Written by William Shepherd

In the summer of 480 BCE, the Great King of Persia, Xerxes, led an immense army and fleet into Europe with the goal of conquering Greece. Fifteen years earlier the Athenians had played a minor part in the five-year revolt of his Greek subjects spread across the western fringe of his empire, and in 490 BCE they had added injury to insult at Marathon by comprehensively defeating a punitive expedition launched by Darius, Xerxes' father. It was Xerxes' duty as Darius' successor to execute his father's vision.

Just over 30 of the hundreds of Greek city states resisted the Persian invasion – fortunately this included four of the most powerful: Athens, Sparta, Corinth and Aegina. These cities were appalled at the prospect of falling under tyrannical rule sustained by external power, especially if that

power flowed from a towering throne hundreds of kilometres away. Under Persian rule, any form of government might have been allowed, even emerging democratic systems as at Athens, but tribute would have to be paid and military service could be required at any time. At the level of the state and by individual (male) citizens, this was seen as slavery.

VICTORY AT SEA, ATHENS BURNS

In the several decades up to 480 BCE the Persians had very rarely experienced defeat in battle. Having advanced unopposed into central Greece, they quickly brushed aside the first line of defence on land at Thermopylae. However, the Greek fleet had so far held its own against greatly superior numbers in the Straits of Artemisium. The relatively modest casualties at Thermopylae were sustainable but the opening of the land route to Attica made their position untenable. The Persians could now move quickly to cross over to Euboea and attack the Greeks' naval encampment on the island's north shore, and to take control of the beaches and harbours that the Greeks would need to put into on their way south. Naval defeat would have ended the war, so the Greeks had no option but to withdraw immediately, sailing under cover of darkness.

As planned, Athens and Attica were evacuated. The entire allied fleet, which arrived a few days ahead of the Persians, was accommodated on the island of Salamis. The allied army, excluding the large Athenian contingent, was standing ready to block the land route into the Peloponnese. If the Persians won command of the sea, enabling them to land troops anywhere they pleased behind this defensive line, it would have been useless. In 480 BCE it was to bring the Persian fleet to battle in the confined waters of the Straits of Salamis where their numerical advantage could be neutralised. This strategy was executed in a brilliant victory.

Athens was left smouldering and in ruins, with the Acropolis destroyed. Xerxes' nephew Mardonius stayed behind with a powerful force and the task, which he ambitiously embraced, of completing the conquest of Greece in the following year.

THE SECOND CAMPAIGN

In early summer Mardonius led his troops south once more and reoccupied Athens and Attica, which had been evacuated a second time. Athens was the most sought-after prize and Mardonius

On the final day of the battle the Persians, led by Mardonius on his charger, held their own against the more heavily armed Spartans. But after their leader had fallen the entire Barbarian army was routed

Image by Peter Dennis from Plataea 479 BCE, William Shepherd © 2012 Osprey Publishing

spared it any further destruction, still hoping the city could be detached from the alliance. But when Mardonius learned the Spartans had finally agreed to march north with their Peloponnesian allies to join the Athenians and confront him, he left Athens in flames again and withdrew into Boeotia.

Mardonius positioned his troops along the north side of the River Asopus on a 6km front straddling the three roads that led to Thebes. The river's banks and muddy bed would make an opposed crossing difficult. Herodotus reports a vastly exaggerated figure of 350,000 for Mardonius' army. However, he may well have had more than 100,000, including a substantial cavalry division and several thousand Greek hoplites, and at its core 50-60,000 veteran Persian, Mede and Scythian archer-spearmen.

A few days later the Greeks followed the Persians north and formed a defensive line along the foothills of Mount Cithaeron about 4km south of the enemy line. Rising ground gave some frontal protection and the flanks rested on spurs or river gullies. The Spartans led the march through the pass and then east along the foothills to take their place of honour on the right of the line. The Greek left deployed to the west with the Athenians on that flank. It was as good a defensive position as the Greeks could hope for. The Spartan Pausanias, their commander-in-chief, was prepared to watch and wait. He was outnumbered but his 40,000 hoplites were more heavily armed, if less agile than Mardonius' troops. In support there was at least the same number of light-armed troops.

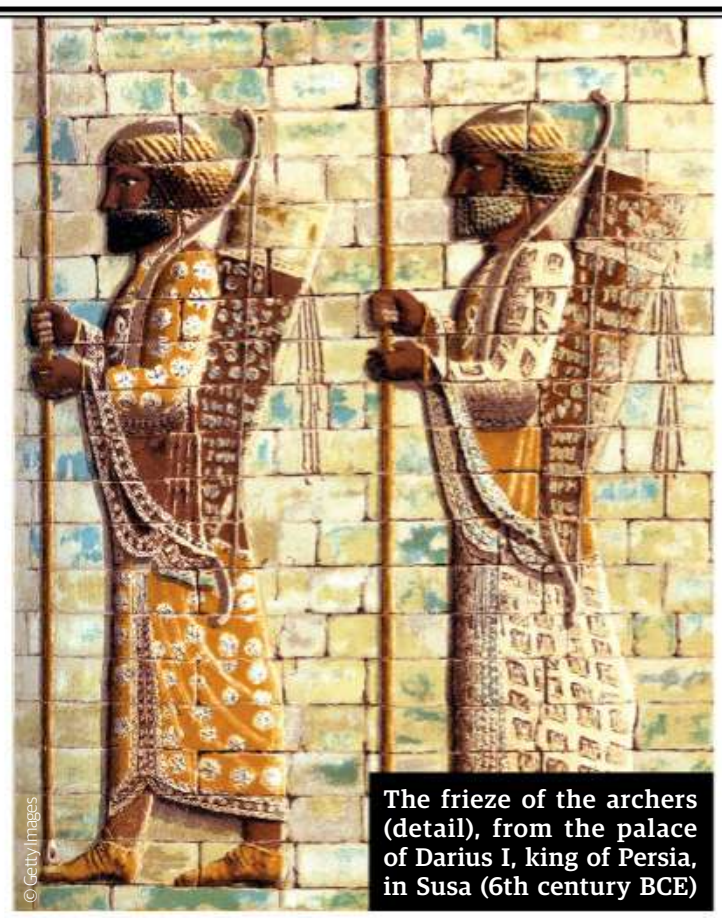
DAY 1: OPENING ACTION

After some days of inactivity, Mardonius launched a cavalry attack. He had several thousand horse while the Greeks had none apart from a few despatch riders. It was a standard Persian tactic to engage first with their mounted archers and javelin-throwers to soften up the enemy. The cavalry cantered up to the Greek lines charging in waves, harassing them and shouting insults. The Megarian contingent, 3,000 hoplites strong, was more vulnerable on an area of flatter ground. The Persians concentrated their efforts, charging and showering them with arrows and javelins. The Megarians, unable to fight back, called for assistance. The Athenians sent across a detachment of 300 hoplites and their entire regiment of archers.

The commander of the Persian cavalry at Plataea was called Masistius. His horse was hit by an Athenian arrow, reared and threw him, and the Athenians swarmed around him. He was speared through the eye slit of his helmet. The Persian cavalry charged in a mass rather than in waves to try and recover their leader's body, calling up the infantry in support. The Athenians were in danger of being overwhelmed, but support of their own arrived first and the cavalry were beaten back.

DAYS 2-8: STAND-OFF

Encouraged by their early success, the Greeks decided to advance to the area of low ridges immediately to the south of the Asopus. Mardonius was content to allow them to move onto more open ground, which was where he wanted them, and to stretch and expose their supply line. In any case, he needed to rest his cavalry and give them time to mourn their leader.



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The frieze of the archers (detail), from the palace of Darius I, king of Persia, in Susa (6th century BCE)

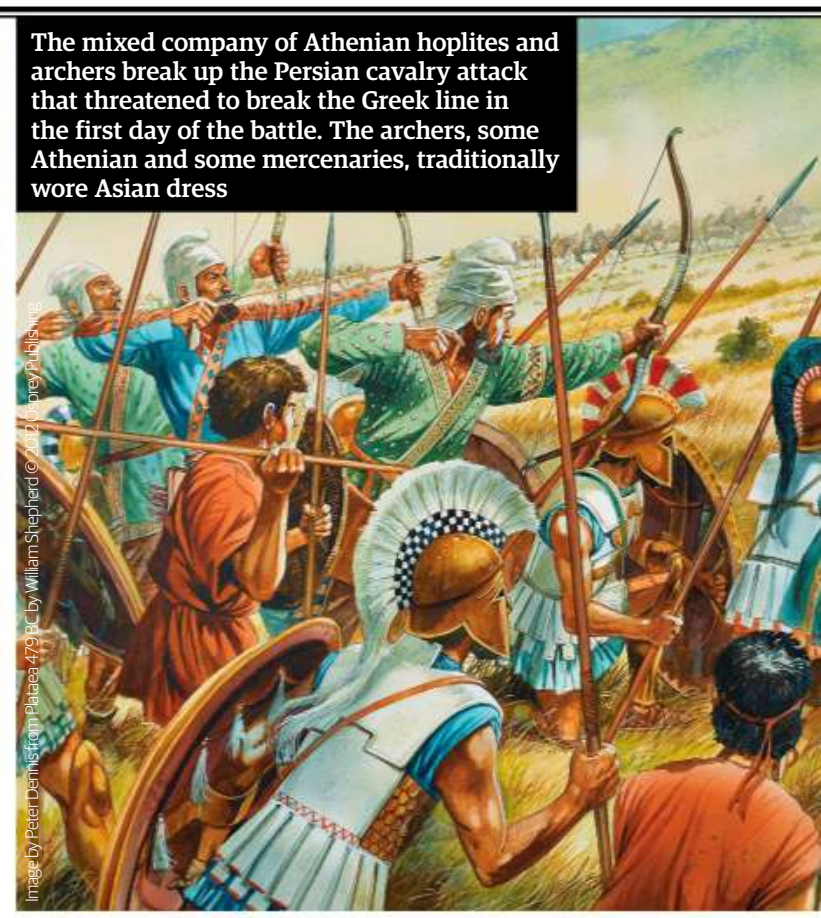


Image by Peter Dennis from Plataea 479 BC by William Shepherd © 2020 Osprey Publishing

The mixed company of Athenian hoplites and archers break up the Persian cavalry attack that threatened to break the Greek line in the first day of the battle. The archers, some Athenian and some mercenaries, traditionally wore Asian dress

The Greeks were well enough placed for static defence in their new position. They were protected on much of their front by rising ground and on the flanks by steeper inclines. But they could not prevent the enemy, especially their cavalry, getting round behind them and it is surprising Mardonius did not exploit this weakness sooner than he did. However, a prolonged stand-off suited him. When and if the time came to fight again, he would have the Greeks in this more exposed position.

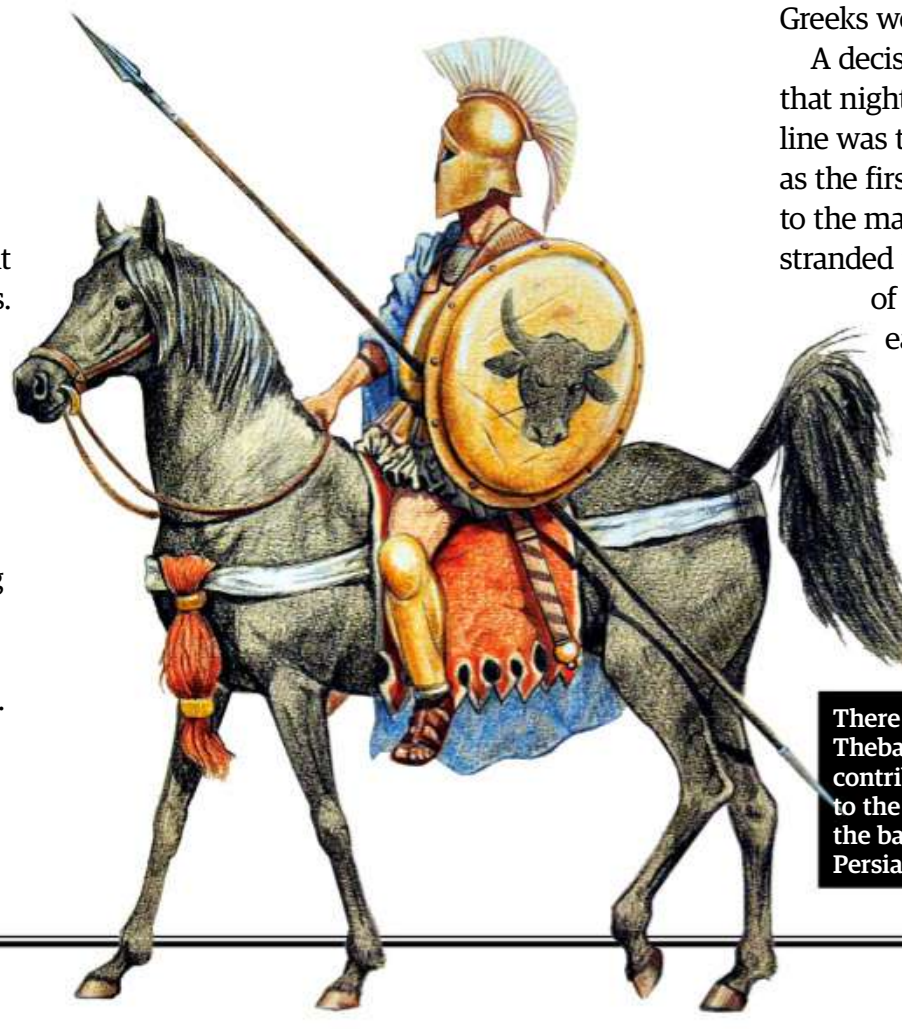
The Spartan commander, on the other hand, was in a country that had been stripped bare by the Persians and there was little left in the way of resources to draw on in Attica. Greek armies normally carried only a small amount of food on campaign and expected to live off the land, so supplies had to be brought from the Peloponnese.

DAYS 9-12: GREECE ON THE RAZOR'S EDGE

A week passed, then Mardonius sent cavalry behind the Greek lines to cut them off from their supplies. They intercepted a large supply column emerging from the pass and captured many of the beasts and wagons. Mardonius let two more days pass then made his next move. The Persian cavalry crossed the river on both flanks and attacked in full force. They galloped the length of the line, front and rear and mauled the Greeks with their javelins and arrows. It was impossible for the Greeks to engage with them and all they could do was shelter behind their shields. Inevitably arrows found their mark. During this attack the Persians found the spring to the Greeks' rear which was their main source of water. They fouled it and blocked it up, and the Greeks were now cut off from both food and water.

A decision was taken by the Greeks to fall back that night into the foothills of Cithaeron. The new line was to be the same distance from the Asopus as the first day's position but to run from the exit to the main pass where the supplies were now stranded to the rising ground in front of the city of Plataea, which the Persians had burned earlier. This was to be a stronger defensive position with much-needed access to food and ample drinking water.

At the agreed time, the Greek centre set off. They had 2-3km to cover heading for the base of Cithaeron but, losing their way in the dark or misunderstanding their orders, they marched a greater distance in the direction of Plataea to



There was no cavalry in the Greek army but the Thebans and other Greeks fighting for Persia contributed a few hundred. They did some damage to the disorganised Greek centre on the last day of the battle and provided some cover for the fleeing Persian infantry

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the west of their objective and took up position in front of the city. The Greek right and left divisions remained in position on the ridges overlooking the Asopus, about two kilometres apart and out of sight of each other, even in daylight.

THE SPARTANS STAND ALONE

Pausanias finally gave the order to move at dawn and his entire division apart from Amompharetus' unit headed north. Amompharetus waited until the rest of the division was well on its way then led his men off in formation at a slow pace to rejoin the rest, who had gone about a kilometre. They had halted there to wait for Amompharetus' unit and just as it reached them, the Persian cavalry came up and attacked the whole division.

The cavalry had pushed forward, seeing empty ground where the Greeks had been drawn up previously. It may have been a coincidence that Amompharetus rejoined the main force at exactly the moment when the cavalry caught up with it, but this would also be consistent with a measured rearguard action to buy time for Pausanias to fall back with the rest of his 11,500 hoplites and form them into battle order. If his unit comprised approximately 1,000 hoplites with a larger number of light-armed Helots, he could cover a broad front in a tight formation and keep the Persians occupied. According to some sources, Amompharetus, who died in the ensuing fighting, was identified as one of the heroes of the battle, which his alleged act of insubordination would not have merited.

Drawn up in close order, Pausanias' hoplites with substantial light-armed support would have formed an extremely solid front 2-3,000m in width. The gully formed by a tributary of the Asopus, which cannot now be located, would have covered one of his flanks and similar terrain may have protected the other, but it is likely the cavalry could get around his flanks and behind him. The Athenians had not arrived and Pausanias was for now isolated. However, he was closer to the main pass, an escape

GREEK ALLIES

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PAUSANIAS

Serving as both a general and a regent for the son of Leonidas, Pleistarchus, who was still in his minority, Pausanias was an accomplished warrior and leader. He was in charge of the Hellenic League's land forces at Plataea, but a year layer was accused of conspiring with Xerxes I. He died in 477 BCE.

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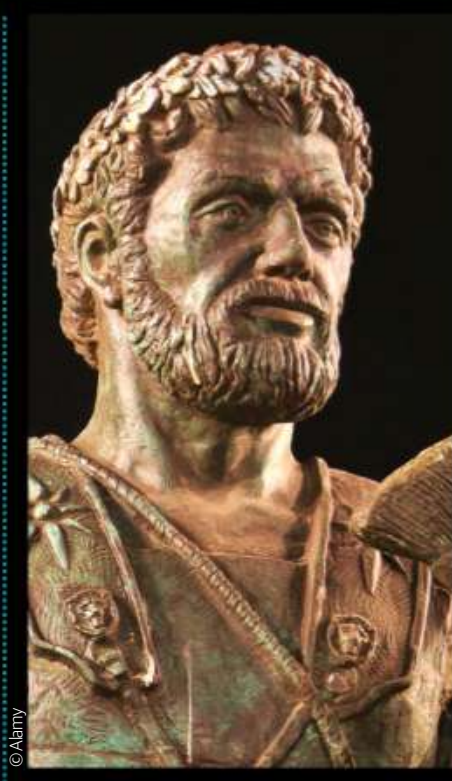
ARISTIDES

Nicknamed 'The Just', Aristides was named by Herodotus as the most honourable man in Athens. Perhaps because of this, when Athens broke from Sparta after Plataea, it was Aristides who was given the leadership of the new Delian League and set the precedents for that organisation.



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ALEXANDER I OF MACEDON

Not to be confused with his famous successor, Alexander III (the Great), Alexander I became known as Philhellene, which means 'lover of the Greeks'. He was actually working with the Persians in this era, but fed information and arms to the Greeks before the Battle of Plataea.

PERSIAN ARMY

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XERXES I

The fourth King of Kings of the Achaemenid Empire, Xerxes the Great managed to overrun Greece with his invasion from 480 BCE, only meeting defeat at Salamis and Plataea. Xerxes had already headed back to his heartland to deal with unrest at home, leaving his commanders to handle the remaining battles.

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MASISTIUS

Having been one of the most popular commanders in Xerxes' army, Masistius and his cavalry should have been a powerful tool at Plataea, so much so that Pausanias feared drawing them out. However, Masistius fell in an attempt to harry the Greeks, severely weakening them for the battle to come.

route if needed, and to the supplies that were held up there, and his men had fallen back.

Mardonius led his Persian infantry across the Asopus. If his cavalry and the Greek right were out of sight, he would have known where they were from messages sent back and probably from the dust raised. He may have thought he was pursuing the whole of the Greek army, but it is more likely that he was seizing the opportunity to overwhelm the most significant part. He probably knew that the Greek centre had fallen further back and that the left had abandoned their position, though he may not have known exactly where the latter were going. When they saw the Persians charging off in pursuit of the Greeks, the rest of the Barbarian contingents raised their standards and set off after them.

PERSIANS ATTACK GREEK RIGHT FLANK

When the cavalry caught up with him, Pausanias sent an urgent request to the Athenians to come to his aid immediately, or at least to send their archers. The Athenians were already on the way, but the Greeks on the Persian right had tracked their move to the east, crossed the river and attacked them. With over 11,000 hoplites on the Greek side and at least that number from Thebes and other cities opposing them, this was a massive confrontation in its own right. However almost nothing is known about it beyond that it was an Athenian victory.

The Persian cavalry harassed Pausanias' formation for an hour or more while Mardonius' infantry covered the 3-4km from their position on the north side of the river. When the infantry arrived, the cavalry withdrew to rest their horses and replenish javelins and arrows, waiting for the moment to attack again when the Greek line broke. The massed Persian infantry now increased the pressure with a barrage of arrows from behind their palisade of wicker shields. The Greeks endured the bombardment behind their shields. Their body armour, helmets and shields were generally hardened against the light Asian missiles but they could still find exposed areas.

Then Pausanias turned towards the nearby temple of Hera and prayed to the goddess. As he prayed, the 1,500 Tegean allies to his left stood up and went forward. As tradition has it, Pausanias' prayer was answered, the omens became favourable and the Spartans got to their feet and bore down upon the Persians. The rest of Mardonius' army crowding in behind his Persians formed an anvil for the Spartan hammer. Persians, standing against hoplites without the protection of a bronze helmet or the standard heavy shield, would have sustained terrible wounds from Greek spear thrusts, but they fought hard. The Persian fort was stormed later in the day and Thebes was taken after three weeks siege. A few thousand of Mardonius' original force escaped home to Asia.

01 Overnight

The Greek centre falls back towards Plataea. The plan is for the whole army to reform on a shorter front, overlapping with their first-day position but running west from the exit to the pass to the eastern side of the ruins of Plataea. The right is (allegedly) held up by Amompharetus' refusal to retreat and the left stays put as requested by Pausanias.

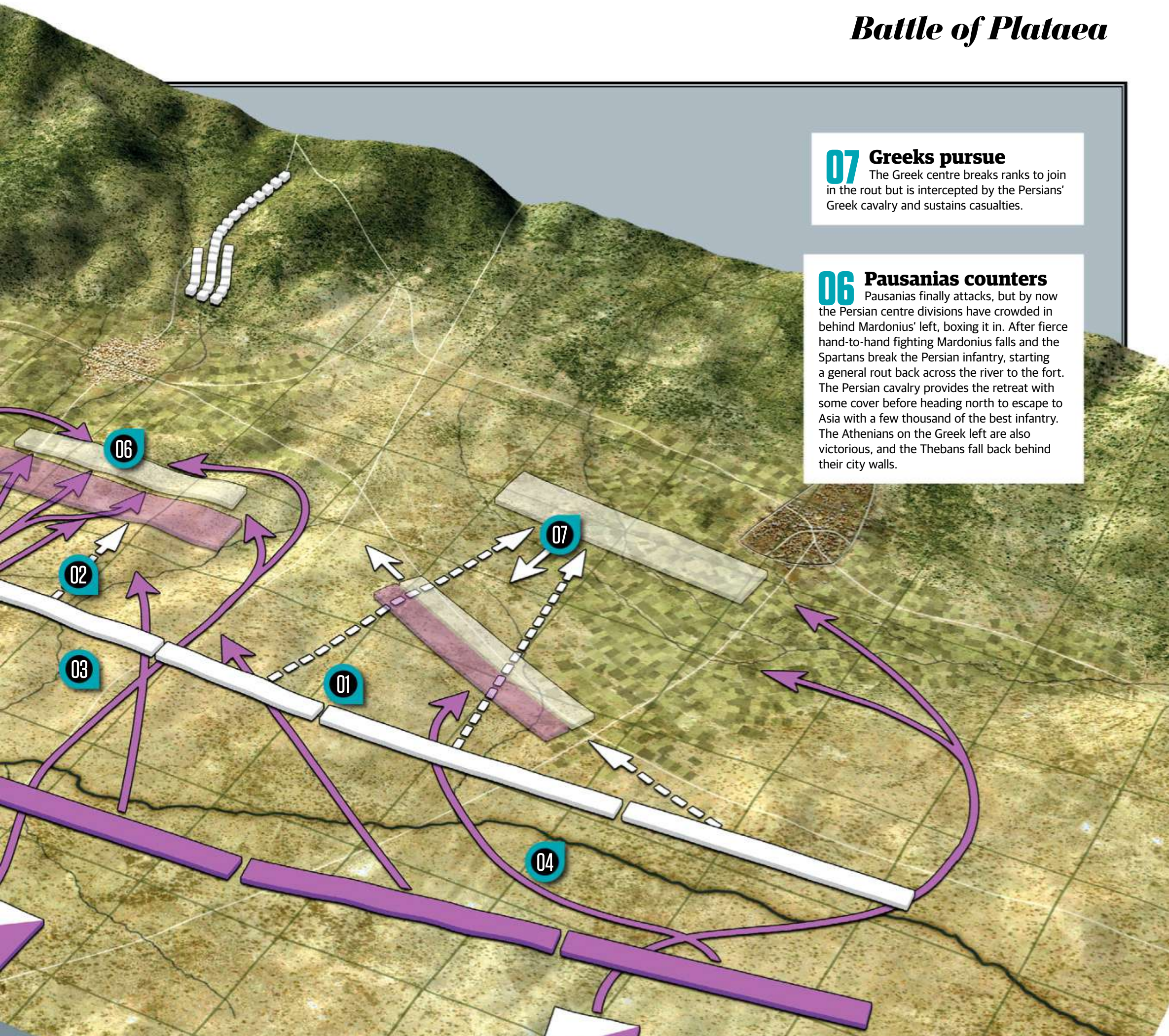
02 Dawn

The Greek right finally moves leaving Amompharetus and his unit behind, but pauses some way short of its intended position. Pausanias requests the Greek left link up with his left.

03

05

Single combat between a Greek hoplite and an unusually well-armed Persian; his shield, though smaller than the hoplite's, looks equally solid, and his scale armour is a match for that worn by Masistius. The soft headgear is typical, however



07 Greeks pursue

The Greek centre breaks ranks to join in the rout but is intercepted by the Persians' Greek cavalry and sustains casualties.

06 Pausanias counters

Pausanias finally attacks, but by now the Persian centre divisions have crowded in behind Mardonius' left, boxing it in. After fierce hand-to-hand fighting Mardonius falls and the Spartans break the Persian infantry, starting a general rout back across the river to the fort. The Persian cavalry provides the retreat with some cover before heading north to escape to Asia with a few thousand of the best infantry. The Athenians on the Greek left are also victorious, and the Thebans fall back behind their city walls.

03 Persian cavalry advances

The Persian cavalry (coming from left and right of the fort), observing the Greek right has abandoned its position, probes forward and attacks it from all sides just as Amompharetus' unit rejoins it.

04 Greek versus Greek

The Greek troops on the Persian right track the Greek left, cross the river and attack over the flatter ground, Theban and Athenian hoplites colliding.

05 Spartans are hard pressed

The massed archer-spearmen on the Persian left cross the river and advance to form up opposite the Greek right and take over the archery bombardment from the cavalry. The cavalry withdraws. Pausanias waits.

Map from Plataea 479 BC by William Shepherd
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What If...

ROBERT F KENNEDY HAD BECOME PRESIDENT

His message of unity promised hope to a divided nation, but was it a promise he would be able to keep?

Interview by David J Williamson

INTERVIEW WITH

TIM TATE

Tim is a multi-award-winning documentary film maker, investigative journalist and author. His 18 books include *The Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy: Crime Conspiracy & Cover Up* (2018). Tim is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

Photographer: Andy Boag. © Tim Tate

With victory in the California Primary election, Robert F Kennedy became a serious contender for the Democratic presidential nomination. The crush of people listening to his victory speech at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles on 5 June 1968 – many of them young and many of them Black – was testament to the spark of hope he had ignited and the tremors of change rumbling beneath the political status quo. To the delight of supporters and the despair of opponents the prospect of another, very different, Kennedy in the White House was now one step closer.

What skills and experience would he have brought to his presidency? Was he in his brother's shadow?

Robert Kennedy was President John Kennedy's most powerful political 'consigliere'. As attorney general – an office he used to pursue his long-standing campaign against organised crime – his influence stretched across all foreign and domestic policy. He was, effectively, his brother's deputy and the role immersed him in the country's most urgent problems at home and abroad. But it was the years following JFK's assassination that shaped him more profoundly. Often perceived as RFK's 'wilderness period' – out of power and crippled by mourning – between 1964 and 1967 he transformed from ruthless back-room fixer to passionate revolutionary who spoke out against racial and economic injustice.

What, if any, differences would he have brought to US foreign policy?

One word encapsulates the changes RFK would have made: Vietnam. He was not the only candidate arguing for an end to the war – his progressive-wing rival for the Democratic Presidential nomination, Senator Eugene McCarthy, had championed that cause long before RFK got in the race. But Robert Kennedy's determination was just as great: in February 1968 he publicly promised to halt the meat grinder consuming thousands of young American lives, arguing that "the best way to save our most precious stake in Vietnam – the lives of our soldiers – is to stop the enlargement of the war, and that the best way to end casualties is to end the war."

Had he fulfilled that pledge, not only would the war have ended six years sooner – saving countless US and Vietnamese lives – but neither Cambodia or Laos would have suffered the large scale carpet-bombing sanctioned by Richard Nixon from 1969 onwards.

And if RFK remained true to the spirit of his 'wilderness years' speeches, the United States would have adopted a significantly more hostile approach to countries that oppressed their own citizens. In South America he denounced the military juntas of Argentina and Brazil, and in apartheid-era Cape Town he exhorted South Africa's white students to "build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

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Main image source: © Alamy, © Getty Images

RIGHT
By 1968 Bobby had truly emerged from his brother's shadow

THE PAST

1961-63

POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

As attorney general in his brother's administration, RFK was a combination of back-room enforcer, personal shield and presidential advisor. Directly involved with the Soviets in the negotiations over the Cuban Missile Crisis, he had been the one to successfully advise a blockade of Cuba rather than the more confrontational option of invasion. But wielding such power so close to the president came with its dangers. By the time RFK's chance for presidency came there were those who still felt aggrieved by the way they'd been treated, ready to ensure his ride would not be smooth.

1963-68

HIS OWN MAN

Following his brother's assassination, RFK's political fortunes turned sour. At odds with President Lyndon Johnson, his influence in the White House evaporated. He entered the Senate to represent New York and, never afraid to voice the views he held so passionately, the gap between him and the administration grew wider. He repeatedly denied he would run for the candidacy against President Johnson. But with an escalation in Vietnam, the influence of his wife and friends to run, rising racial tension, riots and subsequent cover-ups of 'white racism' by the Administration, he believed he shouldn't stand on the sidelines.

APRIL – JUNE 1968

DEATH OF HOPE

The year 1968 would see a double tragedy for civil rights in the US. Against a backdrop of running battles in cities between rioters and police, the civil rights activist Dr Martin Luther King Jr was a voice of reason and of peaceful protest. He was assassinated on 4 April 1968. By a twist of fate, Robert Kennedy was addressing a crowd in a poor, Black neighbourhood on the same day. Further riots were feared, but his speech was a eulogy for Dr King and all he stood for. Two months later RFK himself was the victim of an assassin's bullet and with them both died the hopes of a generation.

Would his passion for civil rights and the championing of the poor and minority groups have been a catalyst for change or just sown more division?

The nature of America's political power structures means that presidents can only achieve their aims with the support of Congress. By the time RFK would have entered the Oval Office, segregation-supporting Southern Democrats were moving further away from their party and closer to the Republicans. Although the tide of history was against them they could have posed an obstacle to a more ambitious programme to enfranchise minority groups. However, earlier in the 1960s RFK had adopted – and championed – an innovative approach towards empowering deprived communities. Coupled with his willingness to recognise the fears of white America and his determination to confront the scourge of racial discrimination, it is a reasonable bet that his presidency would have achieved significant progress.

How would he have tackled corruption and organised crime?

There is little doubt that as president RFK would have continued his crusade against organised crime. As chief Democrat counsel in the 1950s televised Senate investigations into the Mafia and its placemen in America's unions, he helped expose violent extortion and endemic corruption by union leaders, some of whom had skimmed millions from the pension funds of ordinary workers to support their extravagant lifestyles. And the hearings also revealed close links between union bosses and the Mafia: what RFK would later call "a conspiracy of evil."

His efforts to break this conspiracy continued throughout his time as JFK's attorney general, and by 1968 he had begun to question the official account of JFK's murder, promising privately to re-open the investigation. There is significant evidence that had he done so, evidence of organised crime links – at the very least – to the murder would soon have emerged, further spurring his determination to tackle the webs of corruption that supported these racketeers.

Kennedy campaigned passionately about civil rights and equality

As president who would have been RFK's greatest supporters, and greatest critics, and why?

I began investigating Robert Kennedy's assassination in 1988, first for a documentary then for my 2018 book. Over 30 years I interviewed many of those who worked with RFK and many of those who opposed him. What struck me throughout was the extreme polarisation of opinion. People either loved him passionately or loathed him wholeheartedly: there was simply no middle ground.

His greatest supporters were the poor and dispossessed: those whose lives were blighted by racial and economic injustice – the victims of America's unequal concentration of wealth and power. From the families he met, barely existing in shacks across the South, to those trying to survive in the urban slums of the north, to the California farm workers whose strikes and demands for economic justice RFK championed: these were RFK's most passionate believers.

His enemies were – as he once noted – almost too numerous to count: as he remarked to a reporter, "You won't have any trouble finding my enemies. They're all over town." The political powerbrokers in Washington DC – Republican and Democrat alike – distrusted him, at best. The CIA had not forgiven him (or JFK) for their hostility in the wake of the Bay of Pigs; meanwhile FBI Director J Edgar Hoover loathed RFK and had plotted against him. Across the United States, his championing of civil rights, racial justice and the plight of America's farm workers attracted

ABOVE Minutes after his victory speech RFK was mortally wounded

LEFT The crowd in the Ambassador Hotel celebrated a significant victory

the loathing of segregationists, white supremacists and some of the country's major agricultural leaders, while organised crime – both the Mafia and its allies in corrupt labour unions – were sworn foes.

When he was assassinated, how likely were his chances to become president?
Victory in the California primary did not guarantee RFK the nomination as the Democrat's candidate in the 1968 general election, but it went a very long way towards it. To beat Hubert Humphrey for the prize would require a floor fight and the support – far from certain – of an overwhelming majority of delegates and power brokers at the party's Convention in Chicago. But even if he triumphed there, would he have beaten the likely Republican nominee, Richard Nixon, and been elected to the Oval Office? His supporters were – and remain – in no doubt and their view is endorsed by academic historians of America's presidency. To them, especially in the troubled and violent year of 1968, with America torn apart by race and poverty riots and with public anger at the ever-more catastrophic Vietnam War exploding on to the streets, Robert Kennedy alone seemed to be the candidate promising radical change – both at home and abroad.

That assessment was shared by RFK's opponents: during the course of my research, I located numerous long-suppressed LAPD and FBI reports and witness interviews. Each contained explicit threats by identified RFK enemies; each recognised that if he won in California he would win the general election – and that therefore he had to be eliminated.

What future events in US and/or world history may have changed with Robert Kennedy as president?
The question 'what if?' is difficult for historians, and even more so for journalists. Counter-factual history – essentially seeking to understand an alternative path of human events had a single incident not taken place – is ineluctably coloured by the hopes of those who dare to risk the exercise. Above all, it is fraught with hazards since events never occur in isolation and simply removing one bump in the historical road does not automatically preclude the changes that it caused. In particular, it is almost impossible to assess accurately what Congress would have done with – or to – an RFK presidency. In a first term, let alone a potential second four years, would the Democrats have continued to control the Senate and House of Representatives? And even if they did, would Washington's long-nurtured hostility to Robert Kennedy have obstructed him?

Given a fair wind, it is certainly arguable that the United States would not have endured the traumas of Watergate and the shooting of students at Kent State University; had RFK won, Richard Nixon would have almost certainly never again wielded political power. Internationally, US support for despotic regimes would have been less of a global cancer.

Domestically, RFK was the last national leader able to command real trust from both substantial cross-sections of white and African American citizens. A Robert Kennedy presidency could well have moved the divided country significantly towards reducing the racial and economic injustice that still blights it today.

THE POSSIBILITY

1969-73

BOB V THE MOB

RFK was no stranger to confrontation when it came to organised crime and the corrupt exploitation of workers. Union boss Jimmy Hoffa of the all-powerful Brotherhood of Teamsters had clashed with him in hearings years before, and the Mafia bosses were also his enemies. RFK's passion for integrity and transparency in politics and the institutions in which people placed their trust was heartfelt, and there can be little doubt that his commitment for justice would have spilled over into his presidency. RFK's war on corruption would have continued, but this time with added presidential power.

1969

NO MORE 'NAM

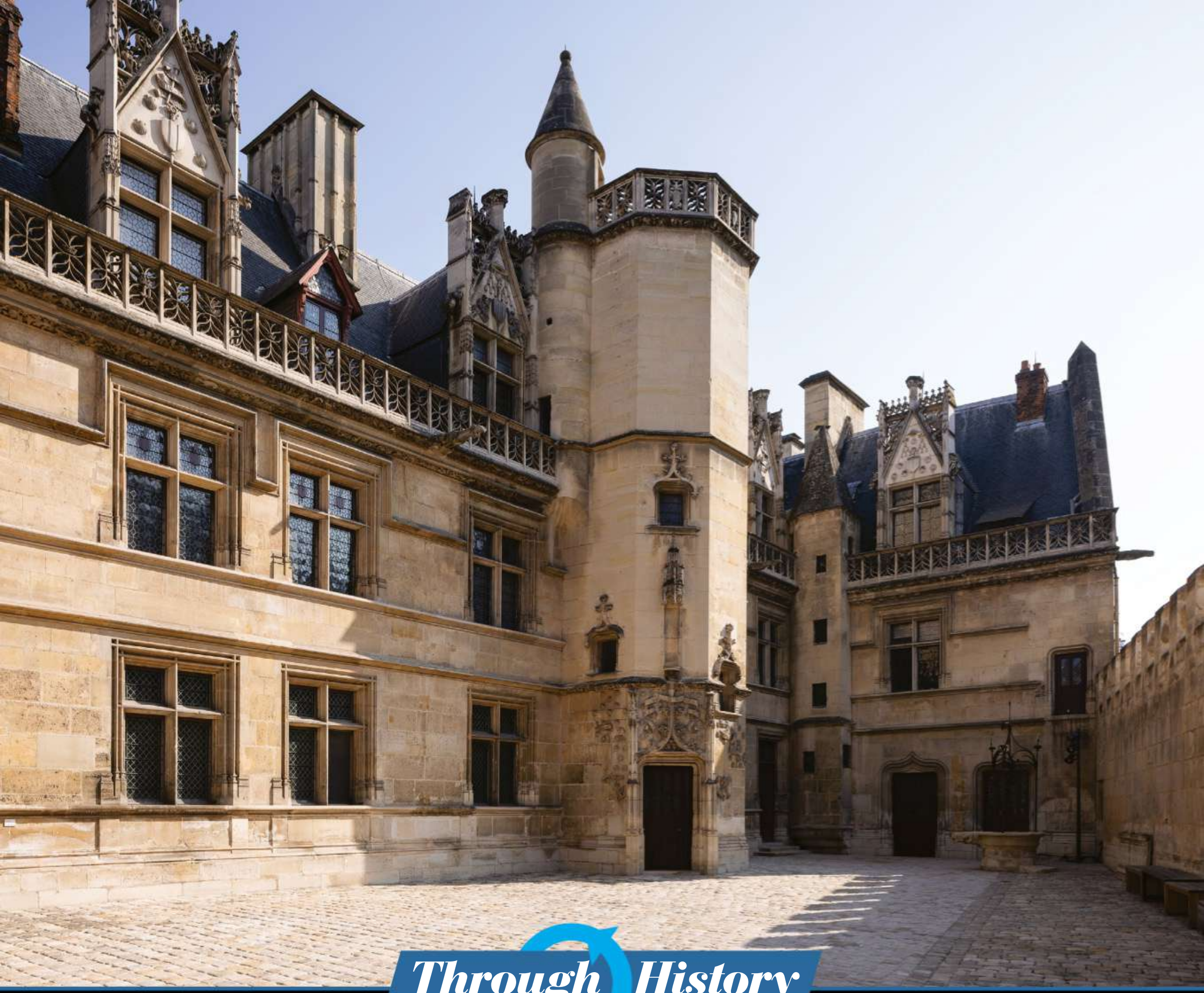
The pivotal issue overseas would have been the Vietnam War. His view of America's place in the world was one of democratic role model, and the war had fractured the nation. By early 1968 there were around 485,000 US troops in Vietnam, and 20,000 had been killed. RFK wanted a peaceful settlement and the troops brought home. Under the new President Kennedy all of this would have been possible, thousands of lives saved, and America's reputation for civilised common sense established.

1969 – PRESENT

RIGHTS FOR ALL

No Robert Kennedy presidency would have been complete without an overhaul of the rights of all citizens, regardless of the colour of their skin or background. RFK's belief in justice for all was unwavering, but he would need every ounce of his personal grit and determination to battle with an uncompromising and unforgiving system that was afraid of political and social change. It would have been a bumpy road, and some form of compromise would have been the result, but by setting things in motion the legacy of an RFK presidency may well have been a very different, more integrated and more inclusive society.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images



Through History

EXPLORING THE MIDDLE AGES

The new and improved Musée de Cluny in Paris once again showcases the best examples of medieval art to the public

Housed partly in the Gallo-Roman thermal baths of Paris and partly in the Hôtel de Cluny, the Musée de Cluny is the only national museum in France dedicated solely to the Middle Ages. Its foundation can be directly linked to Alexandre du Sommerard (1779 – 1842), a collector and medieval enthusiast who amassed a large collection of art and artefacts from the Middle Ages. He lived in part of the Hôtel de Cluny, which was built as a residency for the monastic Order of Cluny in 1485. Upon Du Sommerard's death, his collection and the Hôtel de Cluny were acquired by the French state, as were the Gallo-Roman baths that were situated next to the building.

The Musée de Cluny was created shortly after, and the medieval collection was expanded over time. From 2011 the museum underwent a huge transformation – a new reception building was added and the whole museum is now more accessible. As part of these upgrades the museum was closed in 2020, but it has now reopened to the public for the first time in 20 months. On display are some of the most important and beautiful works of art from the Middle Ages.

All images courtesy of: ClunyMuseum

VIRGIN AND CHILD

▲ This picture by Flemish artist Jean Hey, the Master of Moulins, shows the Virgin Mary as she nurses Jesus as a child. Painted at some time between 1480 and 1500, the work depicts the divine pair surrounded by angels.

ARIADNE

▶ Showing Ariadne, the companion of Bacchus, this elephant ivory statuette was discovered in a tomb in the Rhine Valley. It was made in Constantinople in the early 6th century and shows Ariadne accompanied by a satyr and a maenad.

LOVE BOX

▲ Depicting scenes of courtly love, this decorative box features visual representations of chivalric tales. Showing characters like Lancelot, Tristan and Iseult, the box also features a scene of a romantic joust and women shooting flowers as if they were arrows.

GOLDEN ROSE

This golden rose was given to the Count of Neuchâtel by Pope John XXII in 1330 as part of the annual tradition of the pope giving a rose to one of his followers. It is the oldest surviving golden rose.

ALTAR FRONT

Originally installed in Basel Cathedral, this gold altar front shows Christ surrounded by St Benedict and three archangels. Made in the 11th century, the altar also depicts Emperor Henry II and his wife at the feet of Christ.

GAME BOX

This bone, walnut, ebony and ivory game set dates from c.1500 and is one of the oldest known boxes of its kind. Made in France, it features six different games from the Middle Ages including chess, nine-men's morris and glick.

THE LADY AND THE UNICORN

The sixth tapestry in the *Lady and the Unicorn* series, it is unknown exactly what this wall-hanging depicts. Woven in c.1500, the other tapestries represent the five senses. This tapestry is mysteriously inscribed with "To my only desire."

SAMSON AND THE LION

This stained-glass panel depicts the biblical character Samson prising open the jaws of a lion, which he then supposedly tore apart with his bare hands. The panel was originally part of the windows of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

2x © StudioCanal

THE DIVIDED HEART

A drama following a young boy taken from his birth mother by the Nazis during WWII

Certificate: PG **Director:** Charles Crichton **Cast:** Cornell Borchers, Armin Dahlen, Yvonne Mitchell **Released:** Out now

One of the many atrocities committed by the Nazis against the various races and groups they subjugated was a programme known as 'Lebensborn', an aspect of which involved kidnapping children from occupied countries. This latest Blu-ray release from StudioCanal's Vintage Classics label is a 1954 drama about a small boy separated from his birth mother, raised by a loving foster family and now caught between them.

The Divided Heart was made by the popular Ealing Studios, but don't expect one of its famous light comedies. It is an incredibly emotional and exceptionally powerful film, even 70 years after its initial release. It follows ten-year-old Toni (Michel Ray), who was adopted by German couple Franz and Inga Hartl (Armin Dahlen and Cornell Borchers). However, it is revealed that contrary to being a war orphan as the couple were informed, Toni was in fact taken from his Yugoslavian mother (Yvonne Mitchell) as a baby during the Nazi occupation. The International War Refugee Organisation (represented in the film by British character actor Geoffrey Keen) tracks Toni to the Hartl's residence and informs them that the decision of who will obtain custody over the boy will be decided in court.

The film's real power lies in how it earnestly shows the emotional impact on both the birth and foster parents, as well as on Toni himself. The Hartls are portrayed as not having been aware of Toni's past. They are shown to have cared for and protected him, showering him with love and affection. Meanwhile, Sonja Slavko (from whom Toni was abducted) is likewise shown to have adored the infant child who was taken and who she now views as containing the last living part of her dead husband. Throughout, Jack Whittingham's script treats both family's plights with care and sensitivity, right to the final few tenses moments when a decision about the boy's future is made.

Toni is brilliantly played by child-actor Ray, who shows an extraordinary range for someone so young. Ray has a large number of emotional scenes throughout the film and it is his performance that helps make the story so heartbreaking. Keen is good in his small role, playing the stereotypical 'upper class British gent' and voice of authority. However, other than Ray, it is Mitchell who shines as Sonja Slavko. As her character does not speak the Hartl's language, much of her performance is silent. Despite what could have been a possible hindrance to her role, Mitchell presents a haunting portrayal of a woman whose world was completely shattered by the horrors of war.

The Divided Heart is an exceptionally well-made drama dealing with a tough subject, and it deserves to be seen. StudioCanal's new Blu-ray, DVD and digital releases with supplementary interviews and stills gallery, not to mention a crystal clear restoration, present the film in the best possible way. Praised upon its release, winning three British Academy Film Awards, *The Divided Heart* should be admired and praised again. ***CM***

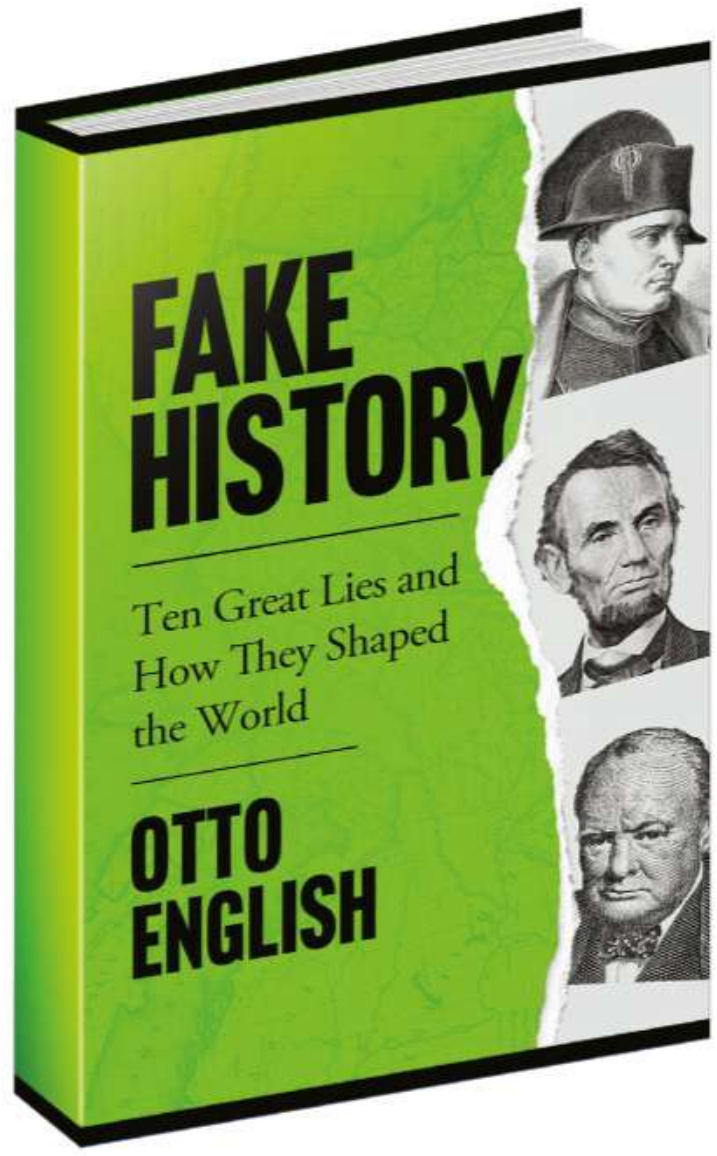
★★★★☆

Reviews by
Callum McKelvie, Jonathan Gordon, Emily Staniforth

FAKE HISTORY

An intriguing study of lies and myths in popular history

Author: Otto English **Publisher:** Welbeck Publishing Group
Price: £9.99 **Released:** Out now



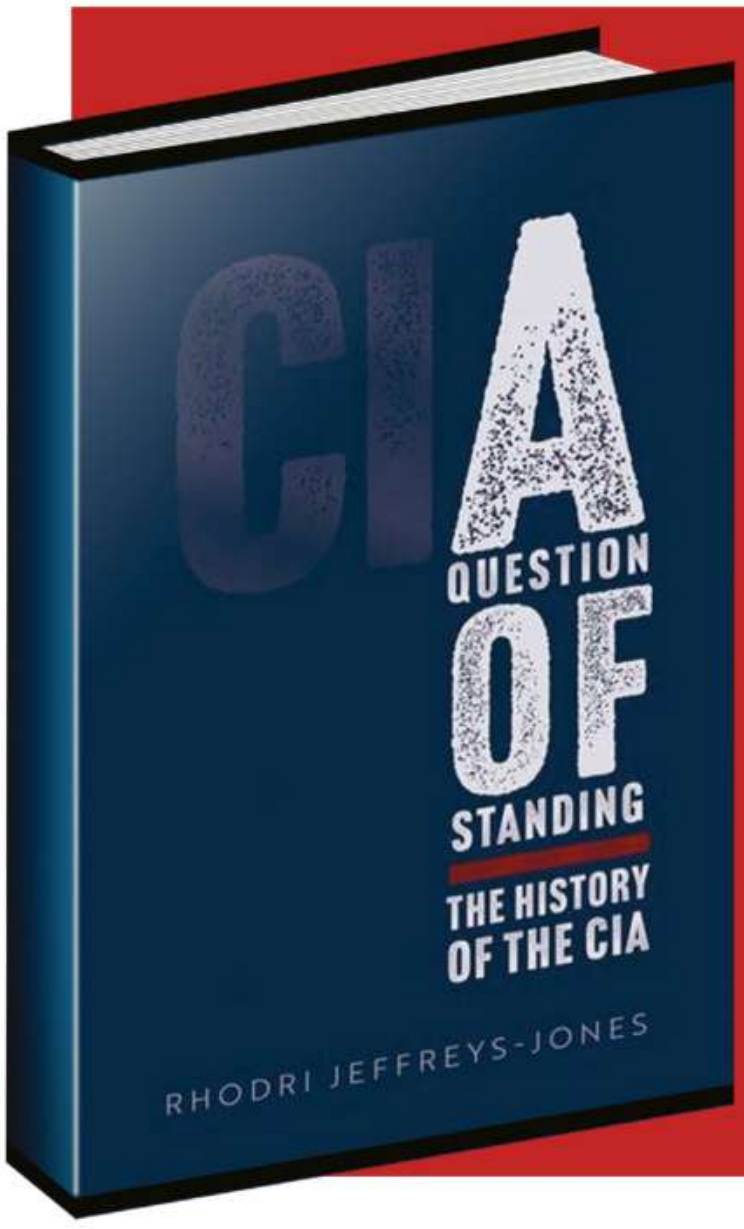
Labelled an "anti-Brexit firebrand" by Dominic Sandbrook, Andrew Scott authors *Fake History* under the pen-name Otto English and his book is an attempt to pick apart what we think we know about famous historical figures and events.

The elephant in the room is that none of English's 'lies' are really lies. Instead, his targets are the constructed 'myths' of history. Anyone expecting 'lies' will therefore be disappointed – this book is more about the sanitising of history and how we construe it into something that we label 'fact', sometimes ignoring troubling elements. It is a point made clear in the opening chapter by his discussion stating statues are not harmless artefacts.

The best example of the topic is English's chapter on Winston Churchill. It begins with calling out a number of popular but untrue anecdotes about Churchill and the constructed myth of his personality, before going into a biography and calling out the problematic aspects of Churchill's past. English also takes the opportunity to critique both Boris Johnson and his biography *The Churchill Factor*.

Admittedly, if you are well versed in the subjects that English covers then you probably aren't going to learn much. The book is also pretty muddled. It won't be to everyone's taste and doesn't present much groundbreaking new research. However, we're not convinced that teaching his readers history is English's point. Instead, this is an important discussion about how history is used to construct myths, making this a book that will make some readers reconsider their approach to history. ***CM***

★★★☆☆



A QUESTION OF STANDING

An incisive history of the Central Intelligence Agency

Author: Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones **Publisher:** Oxford University Press
Price: £20 **Released:** 25 August 2022

As Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones states in his opening chapter to *A Question Of Standing*, the Central Intelligence Agency is an American institution. It's hard to imagine an America where a dedicated intelligence gathering service was not in operation, but the CIA is only marking its 75th anniversary this year. Jeffreys-Jones chronicles the key events in the history of the CIA, analyses its decisions and their effects on the agency and their wider impact on the world.

He demonstrates how the reputation of the CIA has fluctuated over time and its impact or role in the American government is very dependent on the level of trust it has within an administration or with the public at large. He analyses the CIA's failures, demonstrating how it has frequently abandoned its role as an intelligence gathering organisation and instead become caught up in covert foreign action.

The story begins with the American experience coming out of WWI with growing support for the concept of peacetime intelligence gathering that would build towards the creation of the CIA after WWII. It then tracks the agency through its early anti-communist work to the Bay of Pigs, Vietnam, all the way up to 9/11 and eventually the Trump administration.

This is a deep dive into often dark and troubling history. No punches are pulled and if you're interested in foreign policy and the rise of American power, this is well worth a read. ***JG***

★★★★☆

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HISTORY of WAR **RECOMMENDS...**

Out now!

Misfire

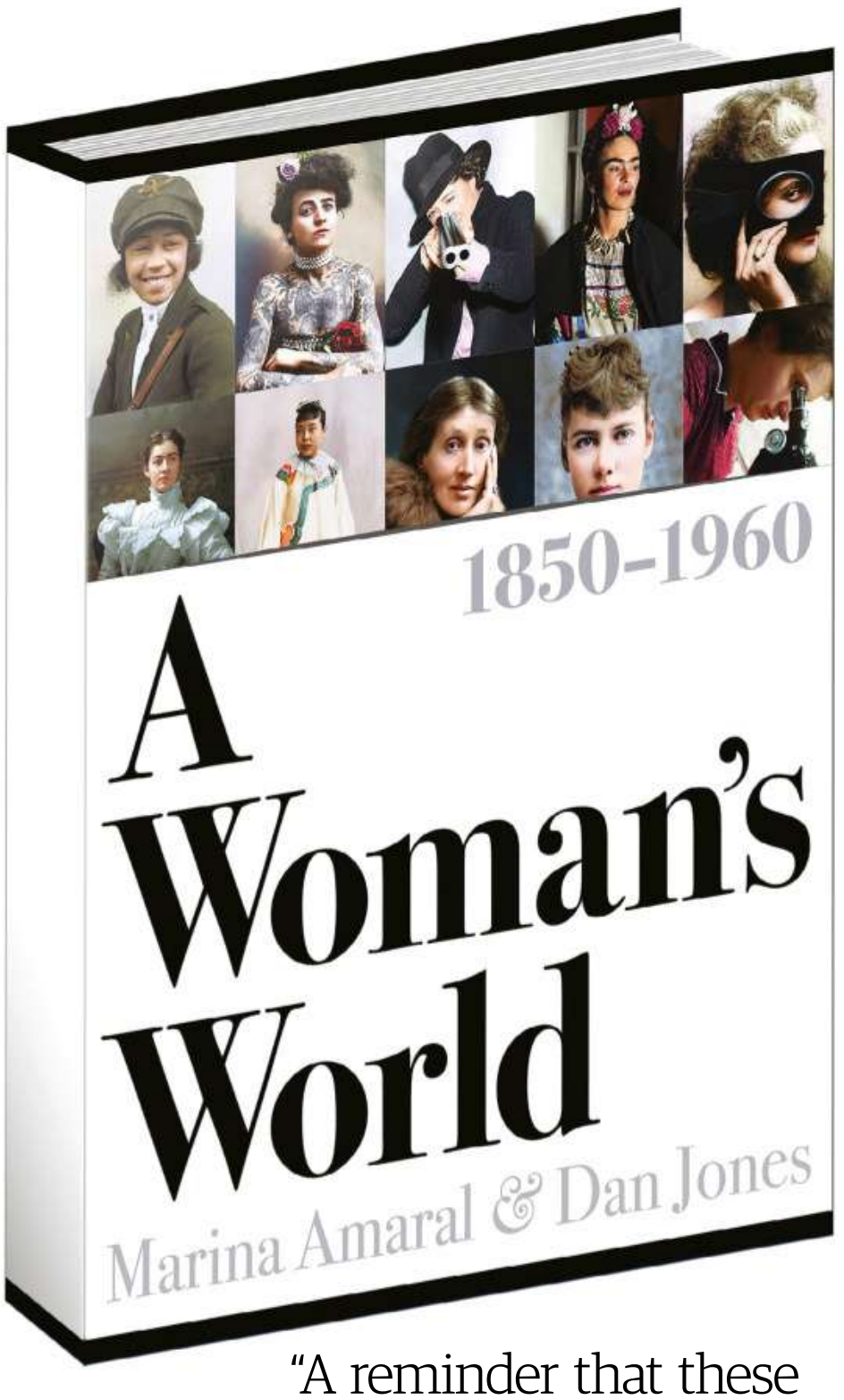
Author Paul Miller-Melamed **Price** £22.99
Publisher Oxford University Press

Author Paul Miller-Melamed shifts the focus of the First World War's origins from the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by Bosnian-Serb activist, Gavrilo Princip, to delve into the situation in the Balkans and how this spiralled into a diplomatic crisis. Miller-Melamed argues that the 'Eastern Question' is crucial to the historical narrative of what he defines as the Third Balkan War, "best known as the First World War."

A WOMAN'S WORLD

Bringing the women of the past back to life in full colour

Authors: Marina Amaral and Dan Jones **Publisher:** Head of Zeus **Price:** £26.99 **Released:** Out now



"A reminder that these women are not from some bygone age"

In this stunning book, Marina Amaral's colourisation of previously black and white photographs breathes life into the women of the recent past. The third book in *The Colour of Time* series, *A Woman's World* brings together some of history's most well-known women, and those whose names we still do not know, to tell the story of people at the forefront of radical change and everyday life between 1850 and 1960. Accompanied by thorough and informative captions written by historian Dan Jones, these photographs add a new dimension to the past.

In the introduction, Jones highlights that in the previous books of their series both he and Amaral have been acutely aware of the lack of women in the photographs they were showcasing. He takes responsibility for this and does a fantastic job of acknowledging that it is the task of a historian to find what is missing. "History makes us. But we also make it. And although it is true that for most of human civilization, patriarchy has underpinned most forms of social and political organization, that, today, is no excuse for laziness," he writes. Jones and Amaral's resulting efforts to focus solely on women for the third instalment of *The Colour of Time* has certainly paid off.

Amaral's skill in colourising the featured photographs is truly breathtaking. Through colourisation, the photographs of unnamed women, such as the women of the Italian Resistance and the women at the Tuskegee Institute in the US, give a platform to ordinary women who were part of some extraordinary historical times. By colourising them, these women feel real and tangible rather than anonymous and inaccessible. This is particularly poignant in the chapter *Women at War* as it feels important that these women are being properly recognised for their work and sacrifice. In the cases of women whose faces are already familiar to us, such as Frida Kahlo, Rosa Parks and Marie Curie, they are brought closer to the reader. It does not feel as though they are far removed from the present day because they finally look like us. It is a great reminder that these women are not from some bygone age but are our recent ancestors.

As the pictures take precedence in this book, it is a beautiful thing to keep on your coffee table or bookshelf. Split into chapters such as *Women in Charge*, *Women on Stage* and *Women in White Coats*, it does a great job of including women from all areas of work and life. The clear chapters make it the perfect book to dip in and out of and it is a joy to pick up in a spare five minutes. However, it is also a fantastic book to dedicate time to reading if you wanted to. Jones' concise captions give context to Amaral's photographs to provide the reader with a real sense of who these women were. *A Woman's World* really allows us to see history from a new perspective. ***ES***

★★★★★

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

AMISTAD

Director: Steven Spielberg **Starring:** Djimon Hounsou, Matthew McConaughey, Morgan Freeman
Country: USA **Released:** 1997

A Hollywood courtroom epic that twists the facts a little hard for drama's sake

VERDICT: Gets broad history right, but messes with the details

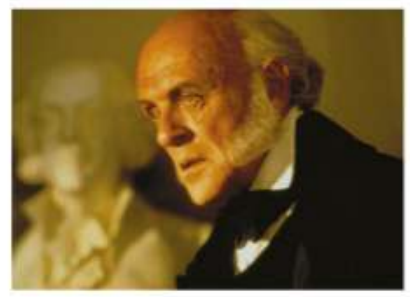
01 The film opens with the revolt on the La Amistad as captured West Africans seize the ship, only to be taken to the shores of New York and arrested. The details of the uprising and conditions onboard are all consistent with what we know of travelling the 'middle passage'.

02 The enslaved survivors of La Amistad, led by Cinque (Hounsou) are defended by abolitionists and lawyer Roger Baldwin (McConaughey). Baldwin was a staunch abolitionist, unlike his portrayal in the film, and Freeman's character Joadson is fictional.

03 President Martin Van Buren (Nigel Hawthorne) interferes in the district court case by switching judges. In fact the judge remained the same throughout and had been pro-slavery, but still found in favour of the defence.

04 The spectre of civil war breaking out if the case goes in favour of the Africans is mentioned by several characters, including pro-South Democrat John C Calhoun (Jeremy Northam). In reality the idea of secession, not war, was foremost in people's minds.

05 Former president John Quincy Adams makes the final argument before the Supreme Court having previously refused to help. In reality he'd advised the defence throughout. His actual speech was eight hours and scathing of the Van Buren administration.



All images: © Alamy

Did you know?

Plums were eaten by the sailors aboard the Mary Rose. Between 80 and 100 plum stones were recovered from the wreck after it was discovered

Ingredients

Pastry

- 300g plain flour
- 150g unsalted butter
- 150g demerara sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- Water

Filling

- 750g plums
- 230ml red wine
- Enough water to cover the plums in the pan
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp ginger
- 2 tbsp demerara sugar
- 2 drops of rose water

Main image: © Alamy
Inset image: © Alamy

TUDOR PLUM TART

A SWEET, FRUITY TUDOR DESSERT, ENGLAND, C.1485 – PRESENT

During the Tudor era, people believed fresh fruit was bad for you. Royalty and peasants alike would eat fruit, as they had plentiful access to it, but tended to stew it and put it in pies and tarts. The increasing availability of exotic spices and sugar meant the rich began to add more of these ingredients to their meals, partly to add more flavour and partly to show off their wealth. This plum tart recipe, with cinnamon and ginger, would have been eaten by wealthier Tudors. It could also have been made with prunes (dried plums) depending on the time of year.

METHOD

01 Preheat the oven to 180°C.
02 Put the flour and butter in a large bowl and using your hands rub the ingredients together until they are all combined.
03 Stir the egg yolk and sugar into the mixture until combined. Add small amounts of cold water until the mixture becomes malleable. Sprinkle flour on your work surface and put the mixture on the top.
04 Knead the mixture until it is a dough, put it in a bowl, cover in cling film and refrigerate for 45 minutes.
05 De-stone the plums and add to a large pan. Add red wine and water to the pan and bring to a boil.
06 Once boiling, reduce to a simmer and cook until the plums have softened. Then add cinnamon, ginger, rose water and sugar to the pan and continue to simmer for five minutes.
07 Take the pan off the heat and place to one side while you assemble the tart.
08 Remove the dough from the refrigerator, divide it into thirds and using a rolling pin roll out two thirds of the dough and use it to cover the base of a tart dish.
09 Cover the tart base with greaseproof paper, add baking beans and blind bake the pastry for 15-20 minutes until golden.
10 Take the tart out of the oven, allow to cool and then pour the plum filling into the tart.
11 Roll out the remaining third of the dough and cut into long strips, then use the strips to create a lattice pattern on top of the tart and brush egg wash over the pastry.
12 Bake in the oven for 30-35 minutes until the pastry is golden.

NEXT MONTH THE RISE OF THE AZTEC EMPIRE ON SALE 8 SEPT

HOPE AND HOMES FOR CHILDREN

URGENT APPEAL

Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine is not just a humanitarian crisis for the Ukrainian people; it's a child protection emergency.

Up to 100,000 children warehoused in Ukraine's vast orphanage system – a network of over 700 buildings – risk being forgotten. Left to face the dangers of war alone as staff flee. As families are torn apart or forced from their homes, many more children are at risk of being separated from the love and protection they desperately need. Worse still, they are at risk of trafficking, or being placed in overcrowded, understaffed and poorly resourced orphanages in border countries.

We must act now.

Born out of the Balkans conflict 30 years ago, we've championed the vital importance of family and community-based care of children and our teams are on the ground in Ukraine, Moldova and Romania to ensure this war does not rob children of the love and protection they need now more than ever. Across all three countries, we're directly supporting displaced families and unaccompanied children with material and emotional support. We're working closely with authorities to keep families together when they are at their most vulnerable and to fight for the safe tracking, monitoring and care for children without parental care. And we won't stop when the fighting stops.

Will you help us by donating?

With your help, we can avert a child protection crisis of epic proportions and ensure children are protected and kept in families. Never orphanages.

To help protect vulnerable children, donate online at: **www.hopeandhomes.org/donate**. Or call **01722 790 111** Monday – Friday 9am - 5pm.

Please quote **FP22 - Kn** when making your donation.

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